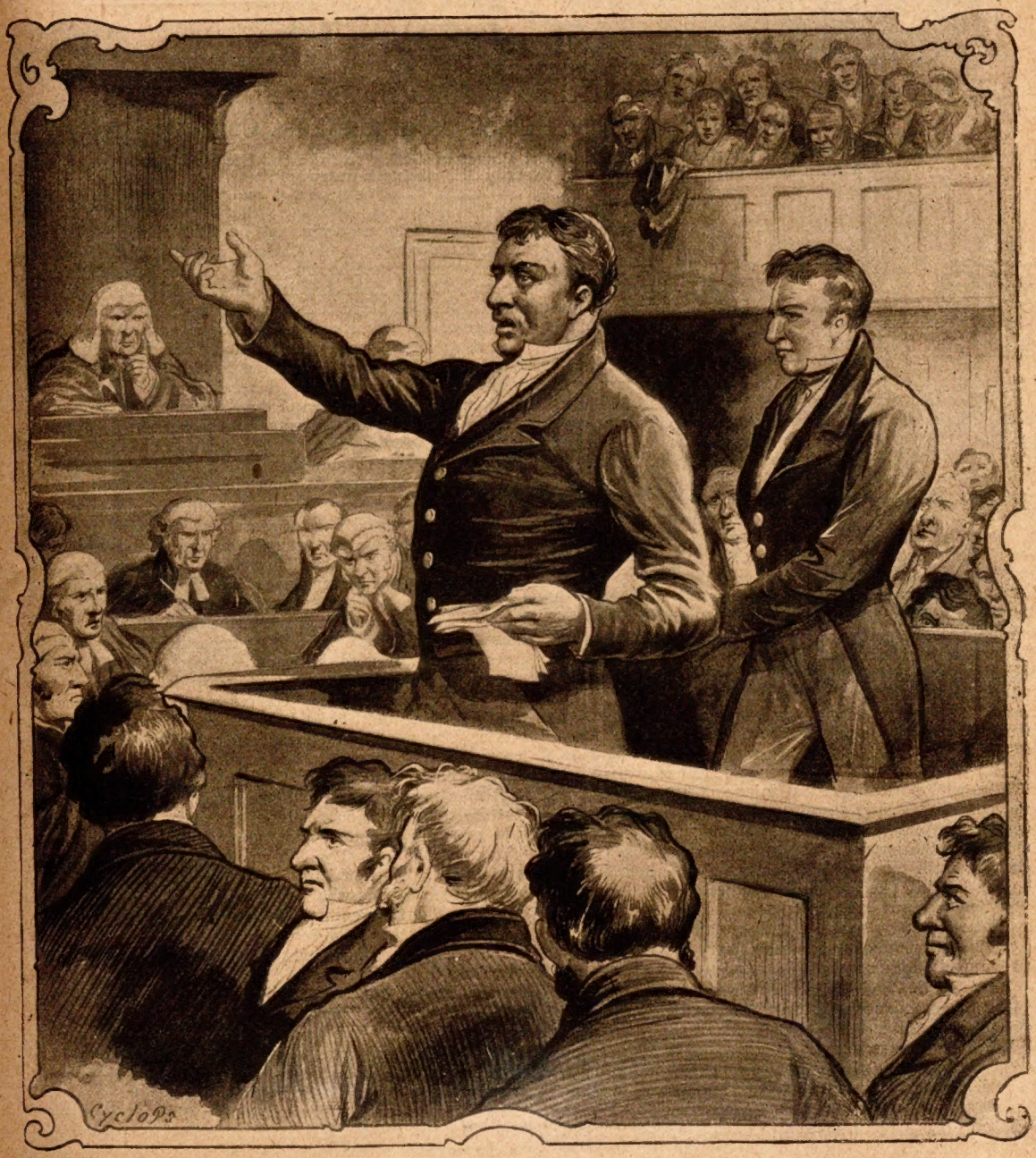
POLICE BUDGET EDITION

EDITED BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE PENNY



THURTELL ON HIS TRIAL.

Vol. VI.—No. 74.

THE TRUE and TRAGIC TALE of THURTELL

The Brutal Murder of Mr. Weare in 1823 by Thurtell, Hunt, and Probert: One of the Causes-Celèbres of the Last Century.

"Murder is the Usurpation of the Power of God. To take the life of a man—or woman—is to wilfully destroy His divine handiwork."

—THIBAULT, "The Moods of Man."

PART III.

THE next witness was John Upson, examined by Mr. Gurney. He said: "I am an officer of Bow Street; I was present at the examination of the prisoners at Watford; I had a conversation with Thurtell after the body was found. It was taken on a ladder to the Artichoke. I was not present when it was examined."

William Rexworthy described how he kept a billiard-table at Spring Gadens and was intimately acquainted with the late Mr. Weare. He knew his body when he saw it lying at the inn. The witness said: "I am quite positive that the body was Mr. Weare's." The corpse was in a putrid state when he saw it at the Artichoke. "The face was then visible, and I observed that there was the mark of a pistol on the left side of the head. When I saw the body I knew it as being Mr. Weare's as perfectly as if he had been living. Most certainly I was as clear of the fact at my first examination as I am now."

Richard Weare, a thin, short, pale man, having the appearance of a mechanic, was examined by Mr. Bolland. He said that he had a brother. He viewed a corpse at the Artichoke, at Elstree, before the coroner on the same day that Mr. Rexworthy saw it; it was the body of his brother. The witness gave his evidence in an extremely agitated manner, and the counsel for the defence refrained from cross-examining him.

Thomas Abel Ward, a surgeon, described with much minuteness the very numerous injuries the deceased had received, which I have already enumerated, and, at the request of the judge, he drew on a sheet of paper a representation of the wound in the temple and produced from a small box the pieces of the skull which had been forced into the brain. The witness was subjected to a long and somewhat frivolous cross-examination, which appeared to have little reason or purpose, and was afterwards thanked by the judge for the clear and satisfactory way in which he had given his testimony.

Ruthven, the police-officer, followed him in the box, and in cross-examination by Mr. Chitty, in reference to his arrest of Thurtell, stated that the door of the room occupied by the prisoner was not fastened and that the blood on his shirt-collar might have resulted from shaving. Thurtell was in bed when he entered the room, and he offered no resistance. In the case of Hunt, he had to break open the door in order to search his lodgings, and he found the various articles which he now produced in court, including many things belonging to the late William Weare.

Henry Simmons, examined by Mr. Broderick, said: "I am the constable of Watford, and this pistol"—produced—"was handed to me by Mr. Nicholls, of Battler's Green. It was stained as it is now, with the pan down, and besides the blood there was hair upon it. There was a piece of tow in the muzzle as there is now. This knife was also given to me by Mr. Nicholls, and this gold curb watch-chain I received from Mrs. Probert on the evening of the 15th of November. I received a sack, which I produce, from the landlord of the Artichoke." The various articles mentioned by this witness were handed by him to the officers of the court. The judge displayed great anxiety that the hair and blood on the fatal pistol should not be disturbed before they were inspected by the jury.

Probert was the next witness called, and the mention of his name created a great sensation. He was brought through the dock to the witness-box, and passed close by his confederates, of whom Thurtell cast him one scornful and indifferent glance, and no more. Hunt, on the other hand, eyed him with close attention, and during the first part of his examination stood up in the dock in order to get a better view of him. There is no necessity to recapitulate facts already known to the reader. Probert related all the circumstances of the crime with every detail, and made some further revelations. He created a painful sensation by stating that Thurtell had said, "I mean to have Barber, Beaumont, and Woods," and added that the former mentioned the names of other persons he proposed to do away with. Thurtell said, "Joe, we must now go and fetch the body and put in in the pond." Probert stated that he replied, "You shall not put it in my pond; it may ruin us." Thurtell said, "Had it not been for the mistake of Hunt, I should have killed him in the other lane, and then I should have returned to town and inquired of his friends why he had not come down." Only Hunt and Thurtell went out at first to get the body. When they returned they said something to the effect that he was too heavy for them, and that they had only been able to carry him a little way. Thurtell said, "Will you go along with me, Probert? I'll put the bridle on my horse, and fetch him." The witness accompanied him, and brought away the body on the horse to Mr. Wardell's field, near Probert's garden gate. He went on to say, "We dragged the body through my garden down to the pond; we put a few stones into the sack, and threw the whole into the water. Thurtell took a piece of cord and threw it round the feet; then he gave me the other end, and I dragged it to the middle of the pond. Then we all three returned to the cottage. . . . Next morning, Thurtell said, in the presence of Hunt, 'Probert, you must go and

look for that knife and pistol.' I promised that I would. I did so. When I went down the lane, I saw a man at work near the spot, and as I could not search then, I returned to the house. That morning Hunt and Thurtell went away in the gig and took Weare's property with them. . . . On Sunday, after John Thurtell arrived, I walked with him in the garden, and he asked me if the body rose. I said, 'No; it would lie there a month.' I told him that Mr. Nicholls had heard shouts of 'Murder' in the lane, and the prisoner seemed apprehensive, and remarked, 'Then I'm baked!' I said, 'I am very sorry it ever happened here, for I am afraid it will be my ruin.' Thurtell replied, 'Never mind, Probert; they can do nothing with you. I'll tell you what I'll do. When they are all gone to bed, Hunt and I'll take and bury him—where you nor no one can find him.' Hunt said to me, 'Probert, they can do nothing with you, or me either, because neither of us was at the murder.' . . . The next night we went to the pond, got the body, took it out of the sack, and cut the clothes off. We left the corpse naked on the green sward, then returned to the parlour, and fetched Hunt, afterwards putting the body in the gig, and I did not see it again. It was understood that Hunt and Thurtell should bury it, and that I should not be told where it was hidden. I went out afterwards to destroy some of the deceased's clothes. I cut them into pieces. Some I burnt; some pieces I threw about in the hedges. I was taken into custody the day after the prisoners left with the body."

Probert was subjected to a rigorous cross-examination with the object of showing that he was more guilty than his confession made him out to be; but he adhered to his story in the main, and it was probably a fairly faithful account of what had occurred. Mr. Andrews asked some rather embarrassing questions as to the witness's past, and forced him to admit that he had been sent to the house of correction for six months on a charge of stealing money from a till. He denied that he had ever been charged with sheep or lamb-stealing at Hereford, but admitted that he had been in King's Bench Prison for two years on civil suits. His examination ended, he retired the same way he had come, Thurtell again eyeing him disdainfully as he passed, and then Mrs. Probert was called into court. She explained that she was suffering from a severe hoarseness and was indulged with a chair. After the poor woman had given her testimony, the main features of which I have already related, a short conversation took place in a low tone, which was not heard in the reporters' box, between the counsel for the prisoners and the learned judge and Mr. Gurney, as to whether it was proper to ask Mrs. Probert any questions concerning the conversation that passed between herself and her husband on the night of the crime. Mr. Justice Park said to Mr. Gurney: "All that you can ask is whether a conversation took place in which witness communicated to her husband what she had seen and heard. You cannot ask what her husband said." Mr. Gurney then asked the witness: "When your husband came to bed did you mention to him what you had seen or heard, according to the evidence you have given?" Mrs. Probert became very agitated at this, and faintly articulated, "Must I answer?" Mr. Gurney said, "I do not want you to tell us what was said," and his lordship remarked soothingly, "Pray, compose yourself, good woman; you need not be alarmed." It was explained to her that nothing she could say could now injure her husband since he had been formally acquitted, and she exclaimed hysterically, "Oh! I'll answer anything; but has he really been acquitted?" During this affecting scene Hunt turned round to the other occupant of the dock and smiled as if in incredulity of Mrs. Probert's appearance of feeling. Thurtell's countenance betrayed no change, but he bent down a little, took snuff, drawing up his brows and closing his lips firmly, with the expression of face habitual to him. The cross-examination was designed to make it appear that the witness was aware of the acquittal of her husband prior to giving her evidence; but she protested that this was not so, and that for aught she knew to the contrary, her testimony might have proved most prejudicial to Probert.

Thomas Thurtell followed. The moment he appeared in the witness-box, every eye was turned towards his brother, in the dock; but the prisoner looked upon him with the same cool and calculated indifference with which he had viewed the other witnesses. He took up his pen preparatory to taking notes, and watched his brother as he rather nervously commenced his testimony. His lordship had to caution him as to the nature of his replies, which were somewhat evasive, and it was evident that he was reluctant to say anything likely to make matters worse for his unfortunate relative. Hunt said—according to Thomas Thurtell—"We Turpin boys can do the trick," and added that he had been killing game and that he had been holding the bag. He also said, "We have been committing murder," but the witness understood this to be a joke.

Thomas Noyes and Miss Anne Noyes were also

"I saw a man at work near the spot."

examined; but their evidence only went to confirm that of other witnesses, and it need not be enlarged upon at this stage.

Charles Tetsall, who kept the tavern in Conduit Street at which Thurtell was arrested, stated that he noticed a change in the appearance of Hunt on the 27th of October, and perceived that he had had his whiskers shaved. It was Probert who introduced the Thurtells to the witness—"he repeatedly applied to me to become a bondsman for them."

Mary Maloney, laundress to the deceased, related how he had dined at his chambers on the day of the murder, having eaten two chops between two and three o'clock. He told her he was going out of town and expected to be back on the Tuesday following. He went away in a hackney coach at about three and took with him his carpet bag, double-barrelled gun, and a box coat.

Thomas Carr, the driver of the hackney-coach in question, was called, and then came Thomas Wilson, a horse-patrol. He said that he was on the Edgware Road on October 24, and that he met two persons in a gig drawn by a roan grey between the fifth and sixth milestones from Tyburn. They were driving at an excessive rate, and the

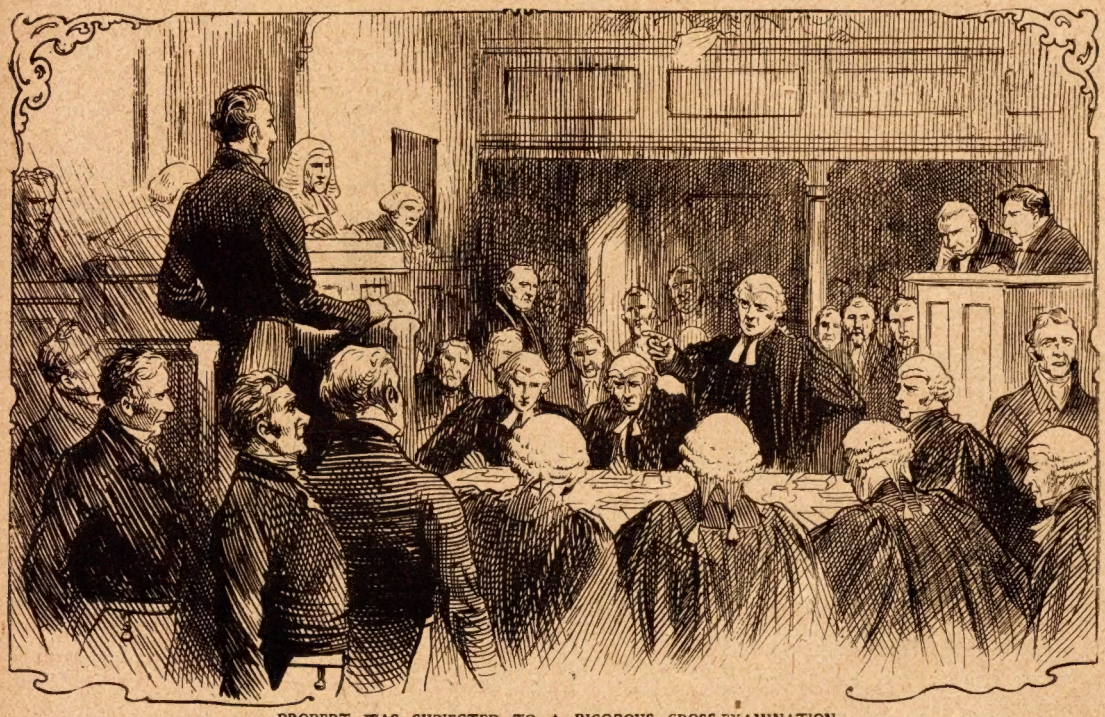
time was about half-past six or seven. James Shepherd, from whose master Hunt hired the gig in question, and Stephen March, from whom he procured the dark roan horse, were also called; and Benjamin Coxwell proved the purchase of a pair of pistols by two strangers—one tall and the other short—for one pound seventeen shillings on the morning of the murder. An ostler at the Bald-faced Stag, half-a-mile from Edgware, on the London Road, deposed that on Friday night, October 24, between six and seven, Probert came to that house in a horse and chaise. He only remained a few moments, and went on towards Edgware.

William Clarke, of the White Lion, at Edgware, said he knew John Thurtell, and that he had seen him about thirty yards beyond the nine-milestone on the Edgware Road that same night. He was then driving very rapidly on the wrong side of the road, and he called out—here the witness used the ejaculation of coachmen who want to avoid contact on the road. "I heard his voice in this manner, and saw that the horse he was driving had a white face; a short man was in the gig with him. On my return to my own house, I met Probert and Hunt, with a gig and a brown horse, outside my door. They had some brandy and water, and we began to talk of Thurtell's private business. On the Sunday after I met the latter walking with Mr. Noyes, and I remarked that he looked ill. He hinted in reply that he was worried for lack of bail in the bankruptcy business."

Philip Smith, Richard Addis, and Susan Woodroffe gave evidence which only bears out what I have already related, and then the jury—the judge having declined to permit them to retire—were supplied with refreshment in the box.

John Harrington, the labourer who saw two men "grabbling" in the hedge the morning after the murder, was then examined, and he identified Thurtell and Hunt, with a dramatic gesture towards the dock, as the men referred to. At this stage Thurtell, who had shown signs of restlessness, addressed the court, and respectfully requested that the further proceedings might be postponed till the following day, he having been "up since six o'clock this morning." The learned judge said that he must leave the point for the jury to decide, and then informed the foreman that the counsel for the Crown had just explained to him that their case was nearly concluded. It was decided at last that the trial should continue till the witnesses for the prosecution had all been examined, and Thurtell, whose manner was most decorous, bowed, and thanked his lordship in a low tone. The remainder of the evidence was not of such importance as to need recapitulation here, and after Richard Hunt, George Nicholls, John Pidcock, John Fleet, and a few others had stated what they knew, the jury signified their willingness to accede to the prisoner's request to adjourn till the next day.

Thurtell and Hunt remained at the bar for a considerable time, talking to some persons standing near them in the court; but at length the judge requested their removal, and they were re-conducted to the gaol in the order in which they had come in the morning. Both looked extremely tired, for the first stage of the case had lasted no less than fifteen hours. The jury, having dined, were accommodated with beds in the Court-house.



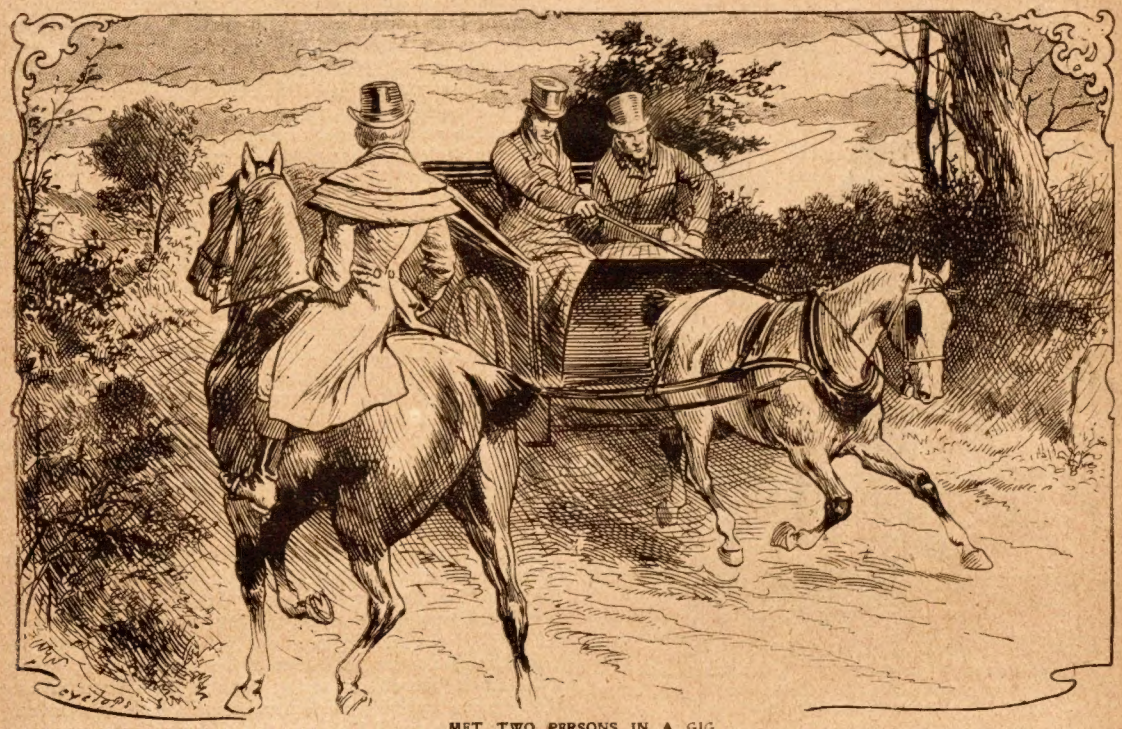
PROBERT WAS SUBJECTED TO A RIGOROUS CROSS-EXAMINATION.

When they had returned to their cells, the difference in the demeanour of the prisoners was most marked. Thurtell still retained his good spirits, and smoked a pipe with relish; but Hunt seemed extremely depressed. They shook hands with apparent cordiality, however—Thurtell having, seemingly, forgotten his animosity towards his fellow-culprit—and continued in friendly and familiar conversation for some time. Thurtell appeared quite satisfied that a verdict of "Not Guilty" would be returned, and remarked to those who conversed with him, "It's all safe; it's all right." On what grounds this intrepid man founded his confidence it is impossible even to guess; for, so far, it was long odds on a conviction.

At nine o'clock the next morning the trial was resumed, and, in the expectation of a spirited defence from Thurtell, the court was again crowded to excess. The two prisoners sat close together in the dock, and, pending the arrival of the judge, conversed together in an affable manner. One or two witnesses—Thomas Thurtell was one—were recalled to add to their evidence or to confirm certain points,

and then the case for the Crown closed, and Mr. Justice Park addressed the chief offender as follows: "John Thurtell, this is the time that it becomes your duty to make your defence." A solemn pause ensued. Thurtell, who was standing forward in the dock, bowed respectfully, and, in a low tone, said a few words to Mr. Jay, his solicitor, who stood close to him. He then stepped back a little distance from the rail of the dock, and, placing himself in an oblique position towards the bench, and with his face to the jury-box, in a firm, sustained and graceful attitude, addressed the court in his own defence.

There are those who always refer to this speech as the finest, with the possible exception of Eugene Aram's, which has ever issued from the lips of a man on trial for his life; but I confess that I think its merits have been altogether overrated. Thurtell made little or no attempt to disprove any of the evidence which told against him. The speech was devoid of any argument or reasoning at a horse-race, or other sporting exhibition." He absolutely denied that the fire at Thomas Thurtell's warehouse had been anything but an accident or that he had previously removed certain goods from there. He also denied that he had ever contemplated the murder of Mr. Woods at a house in Manchester Buildings. "Of Woods I shall say no more at present; I abstain from doing so from feelings of delicacy towards a most worthy female. In proof of my respect for her, I grant to Woods the mercy of my silence." He referred to his being present with the English at the storming of St. Sebastian, and denied, with every show of indignation, the report that he had related a story to Hunt of how he had killed and robbed a wounded officer in the French service. No English officer could be guilty of such a foul deed, he said emphatically; but the words sounded strangely from a man who knew himself guilty of the cowardly crime alleged now against him. Thurtell may not, indeed, have killed the wounded



MET TWO PERSONS IN A GIG.

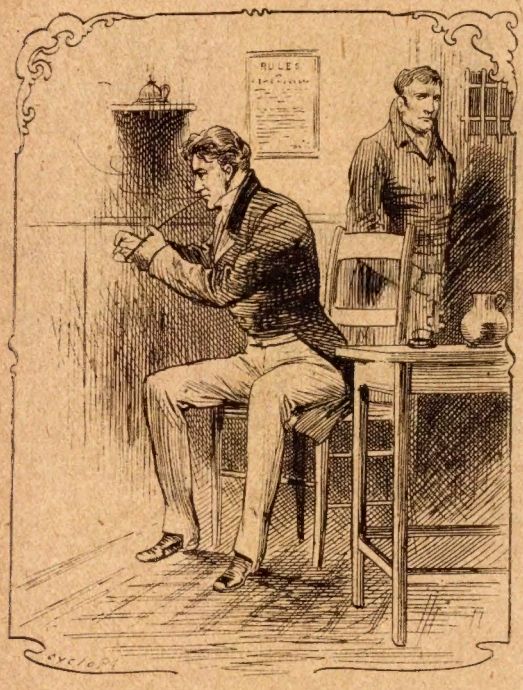
attributes, and consisted, for the most part, of a string of generalities which had no real bearing upon the case at all. The language of the whole effusion was eloquent and correct—I have heard that a great portion of it was written for him—and he delivered it with such a mixture of modesty and manliness as to excite a strong feeling in his favour; but it failed to shatter or even to weaken in a single particular the formidable structure of facts so skilfully reared by the prosecution. Once or twice during its delivery Thurtell stammered, hesitated, and broke down, and once, when referring to an allegation made against him in the public prints as to the cruelties he had displayed during his military service, he fairly broke down and shed tears. But he soon recovered his composure and completed his defence with the utmost fortitude.

I cannot give, in my limited space, the whole text of this remarkable defence. The prisoner began by alluding to the attacks made upon him in the public journals and implored the jury not to let their decision be affected by anything they had heard or read to his prejudice. He then made some allusion to his parentage, and admitted that he had been a gambler; but "three years have now elapsed since I entered a gaming-house, or was present

officer referred to; but we know that he killed Weare in an even more cruel and cowardly fashion.

He then proceeded to thank the governor of the gaol, Mr. Wilson, and the chaplain, Mr. Franklin, for their many kindnesses. "Memory must be indeed extinct and my heart cold for ever, when it ceases to beat for the prosperity of the latter and his family." He paused at this stage, and sipped from a glass of water; then, producing a paper containing written remarks on the evidence, from which he proceeded to read. He suggested that Hunt was able to show the authorities where the body was hidden, "because he had deposited it there himself." But in a later passage he forcibly denounced Probert as the actual murderer. "The evidence of Probert alone points to me. He is himself the murderer. Is it credible that he would have introduced me, just hot from slaughtering, to his wife? Where was the murder committed A quarter of a mile from his own house. Where was the body found? In his own pond. Who took it there? Himself." Thurtell made a big error here; the body, of course, was not found in Probert's pond, but in another pond nearer to Elstree. "Is such a man to be believed? Before you doom a fellow-creature to an ignominious death, I conjure

you to weigh well the statements of Hunt and Probert." Thurtell then alluded to the differences in their two confessions, and remarked that they had been running a race to be admitted as approvers. "I believe that Hunt and Probert enticed Mr. Weare near the fatal spot, and that I, too, was intended as their victim." He pointed out a few inconsistencies as between the evidence of Mrs. Probert and that of her husband; but these were really not of such an important nature as to materially weaken the case for the Crown. He referred to "the disgusting affectation with which Mrs. Probert gave her evidence," and made a violent attack upon the character of that witness because "she took the gold chain, which she knew to have been plundered from the murdered man." Thurtell went on to comment adversely upon the other evidence, and endeavoured to prove that the witness Freeman, who spoke to meeting a yellow gig in Gill's Hill Lane on the night of the crime, now denied that he ever had said so, "al-



Smoked a pipe with relish.

though to my perfect recollection he did." His lordship here interposed, and said, "Prisoner, I don't wish to interrupt you, but I wish you not to deceive yourself by stating as a fact that which is not well founded. In the depositions which I have before me, it does not appear that the witness Freeman asserted that it was a yellow gig; you have stated that he did so, but I cannot allow that to be said." Thurtell bowed respectfully, and did not labour to press the point, merely remarking, "That is the strong impression upon my mind, I assure your lordship." After a few more or less desultory remarks in depreciation of the statements made by Probert, the unwearied prisoner produced a volume of the "Percy Anecdotes," and commenced to give lengthy extracts therefrom relative to the danger of convicting on merely circumstantial evidence alone. He quoted a good many instances in which prisoners have been wrongfully condemned and punished, and particularly dilated upon the cases of William Shaw, executed for the supposed murder of his daughter in 1721, and of John Bradford, in 1736, both being subsequently proved to have been innocent. He also referred to the case of Holman, wrongfully convicted at Kingston-on-Thames in 1748, and concluded a remarkable defence as follows:

"And now, gentlemen, having read these cases to you, am I not justified in saying that unless you are thoroughly convinced that the circumstances before you are absolutely inconsistent with my innocence, I have a claim to your verdict of acquittal? Am I not justified in presuming that you may have arrived at the conclusion that all the circumstances might be true, and yet I be innocent? Judge of my case, gentlemen, with mature consideration, and remember that my existence depends upon your breath. If you bring in a verdict of guilty, the law afterwards allows no mercy. . . . Cut me off not, I beseech you, in the midst of my days. I implore you, gentlemen, to give my case your utmost attention. I ask not so much for myself as for those respectable parents whose name I bear, and who must suffer in my fate. I ask it for the sake of that home which will be rendered cheerless and desolate by my death. Gentlemen, I am incapable of any dishonourable action. Those who know me best know that I am utterly incapable of an unjust and dishonourable action, much less of that horrid crime with which I am now charged. There is not, I think, one in this court who does not think me innocent of this charge. If there be, to him, or them, I say, in the language of the Apostle, 'Would to God ye were altogether such as I am, save these bonds.' Gentlemen, I have now done. I hope you will reflect upon the solemn declaration which I now make. So help me God, I am innocent!"

Thurtell pronounced the last seven words with extraordinary emphasis. He raised his eyes to heaven, and extended his arms a little, then drew them back and pressed them closely to his heart. He then bowed to the court and resumed his seat, while Mr. Samuel Wadeson, who said that Probert was not a man he would believe on oath, unless his testimony was supported by other and credible evidence, Mr. Haydon, Captain M'Kinlay—who declared that Thurtell served under him as an officer in His Majesty's ship "Bellona" from 1812 to 1814—and Mr. W. Walmsley were examined as to the prisoner's character. Although called on his behalf, these witnesses were somewhat guarded in expression of opinion, favourable or otherwise, and the naval captain referred to admitted that he had not met Thurtell since 1814.

Hunt was then called upon for his defence, but his anxiety of mind was such that he was unable to read the statement he had prepared, and the paper was read by Mr. Knapp, the officer of the court. He made no attempt to withdraw anything that he had previously said in connection with the murder, and not once throughout did he mention the names of either of his confederates; but he described himself as having been seduced into making confession by half-veiled promises and hints that by this means alone could his own life be spared. He concluded his defence in the following terms: "I have no desire to prolong a wretched existence, unless it be to afford the opportunity of endeavouring by prayer and penitence to obtain forgiveness and mercy of the Almighty for the sins and trangressions I have committed. But in pity to the feelings of an aged and respectable mother, a virtuous and amiable wife, and a dearly-beloved brother and sister, I do feel most anxious to avoid an ignominious death, and it is, therefore, for their sakes more than my own that I fervently and earnestly entreat the performance of the solemn pledge made to me of sparing my life. I have nothing further to add, but most humbly repose my fate on the justice and humanity of your lordship." Hunt added, from a paper which he read himself, that the greater part of Probert's evidence was false, and especially the part of it which stated that he—Hunt—was acquainted with all the circumstances which occurred previously to the murder. In order to save his own life Probert had found it necessary to sacrifice his.

A few minutes before twelve o'clock the learned judge proceeded to sum up, and I may say at once that it was one of the ablest ever delivered in a trial for murder. While congratulating Thurtell on the beginning and end of his notable defence, he made a vigorous attack upon

the middle portion thereof, and particularly denounced the theory that no person should be convicted on circumstantial evidence alone. "If it had been the wish," he said, "of the parties to have weakened the defence as much as possible, they could not have effected their purpose better than by quoting cases from the 'Percy Anecdotes' of which no lawyer knew anything, and which may be, for anything I know, mere volumes of romance." If the doctrine which Thurtell had that day advanced were to be carried to the extent for which he contended there would be an end at once to the judicature of man. He was very severe on Probert—"than whom," he said, "a more infamous character could not easily be conceived," but he could not forget that much of that creature's evidence, though evidently designed to save his own neck, had been largely corroborated by other and independent witnesses. Altogether, the summing up was a deadly attack upon the defence of Thurtell and of the injured-martyr position taken up by Hunt, against whom he was almost as severe. He was interrupted more than once during the speech by Thurtell, who seemed anxious to speak whenever anything advanced by the judge seemed particularly to tell against him. On one occasion he was understood to explain that a double-barrelled gun belonging to him had been disposed of at a sale of Probert's effects just subsequent to the murder, and a little later he again interrupted the judge, declaring in a not too intelligible voice that Probert had confessed to five men in the gaol that he had planned the whole affair in conjunction with Hunt. His lordship observed that he could not understand what the prisoner meant, and added that at this stage he could not permit the prisoner to comment on the evidence. The speech concluded as follows:

"Gentlemen, and I can say no more than this, after the careful examination of the evidence through which I have led you, you must consider the weight of facts proved in that evidence. If, notwithstanding the darkness at the time the crime was committed—if, notwithstanding the secrecy with which guilt seeks to shroud itself, the finger of God has pointed as plainly to the criminals as if they had committed their crime in the face of day, and before your eyes, it is your duty to your country, your duty to God, your duty to yourselves, to pronounce the verdict which must satisfy your consciences, notwithstanding any feeling you may have towards the individuals its consequences may affect. Gentlemen, consider your verdict."

While the judge was summing up, the contrast between the prisoners was very striking. Hunt appeared ready to sink whenever any strong observation was made concerning him, and his demeanour betrayed the utmost timidity and depression. Thurtell however, preserved a manly firmness, which was evidently not forced or restrained. He was in full possession of his faculties and his mind keenly on the alert to seize and avail himself of any opportunity to benefit his case, and if possible induce a belief in his innocence.

The jury retired at ten minutes to four, and the two prisoners spent the interval in the dock, during which time Thurtell entered freely into conversation with those around him. Several persons congratulated him on his defence, and he remarked that he took "some of it from Phillips's speech when he defended Turner, the bank clerk." He asked a friendly bystander if he did not admire the conclusion of his speech, and when this gentleman remarked, sotto voce, that the worst man of the three had escaped punishment altogether, the words did not escape him, and he said, "I would rather suffer death twenty times over than be Probert and live." He, in particular, ridiculed the idea of Probert's evidence being true, as to his having stated that Weare had nearly got the better of him; for, said he, "Weare was a very little man; and to think it possible that such a person could get the better of me is all nonsense." Someone observed, "At all events, you cannot be accused of betraying your companions?" "No," replied Thurtell bitterly; "before anyone could have got the secret from me he must have torn my heart from my breast." "You mean if you had been concerned?" was the reply; and the prisoner said, "Yes, of course." He added, "I think I have taken a little of the sting out of the poisoned shafts levelled against me, and I know that the lads of the village will be pleased with my conduct." He referred, it may be explained, to his sporting associates in London.

When the jury returned into court Hunt was much agitated; but Thurtell drew himself up into an erect posture, and looked intently at each juryman as he entered. He heard the verdict with perfect calmness; but the foreman was so overcome that he could scarcely articulate the word "Guilty," and was some seconds before he recovered himself sufficiently to deliver a similar verdict as

Thurtell was an officer of marines.

to Hunt. Mr. Chitty then applied for a stay of execution on behalf of Thurtell, which his lordship declined to recommend. Asked as to what he had to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him, the stouter-hearted villain said: "My lord, before you pass sentence, I pray you to take into your serious consideration what I say. I now, for the last time, assert that I am innocent." Hunt declined to address the court. The judge then made a most fervent address to the prisoners, stating that he was confident of their guilt, "in spite of the denials of one of you," as if he had with his own mortal eyes seen the commission of the deed; and urging them to devote the short time vouchsafed them on this earth to prayers for mercy and divine pardon. "Pour yourselves out," he said, "at the feet of your Redeemer in humbleness and truth, and to His grace and mercy I commit you; and while you are seeking for it you shall have my devout and constant prayers that your supplications may be heard."

During this speech the learned judge was himself much affected, and Hunt sobbed loudly and hid his face with his handkerchief. Thurtell's countenance indicated no emotion; he was serious and profoundly attentive.

Sentence of death was then pronounced, and the great trial was over. Only Thurtell's body was ordered for dissection to mark his greater guilt; but as I shall hereafter explain, Hunt's life was ultimately spared.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

I. D. B.

The Fascinating Crime of the Diamond Fields.

FEW jewels have had such a fascination for man from the very earliest days of history as the diamond. It is not its absolute beauty, for few will deny that both the ruby and the emerald are actually more beautiful, but the stone has always had a mysterious influence over mankind, and undoubtedly will till the end of time.

Round every historic diamond there is a web of romance woven, and not a few of the best known stones bear the mark of Cain upon them, for they have been the cause of tragedies of the deepest dye. It is not a matter of wonder that in the land where diamonds are found legislation is necessary to prevent wholesale theft of the wicked gems. Thus it is that the crime which ranks next to murder in the diamond fields of South Africa is that known as I.D.B., the initial letters of Illicit Diamond Buying.

The law takes cognisance not only of the seller, but also of the buyer, regarding him much in the same light as the "fence" or receiver of stolen property is looked on in England, for it is certain that if there were no buyers theft of diamonds would speedily decrease. Still, in spite of the heavy punishment meted out to those who deal in precious stones without licence, the crime is rife, and hardly a day goes by but some diamonds are stolen from the diggings and sold to persons who well know that they are assisting crime by encouraging the thief.

The natives are peculiarly clever at secreting their finds, and if the overseer's eye is off them for a moment a stone, possibly of great value, disappears, and the thief is not detected.

It is not so very long ago that a native of Zululand, who had been employed for years at Kimberley, was admitted to the General Hospital at Madras. He was suffering from a terrific pain in the ear, and outside applications, accompanied by syringing did nothing to relieve him. Fearing that a mastoil abscess had formed, the surgeons told him that he must undergo an operation, or no relief could be given him. Umzila, the native, objected at first, but eventually he could bear the pain no longer, and consented to the operation. When the surgeons had opened the ear they found that far down the canal was a small pouch, invisible from outside. The drum of the ear had perished. At the base of the pouch was a small substance imbedded, and it was decided to remove the "tumour," as the doctors thought it was. Judge of their surprise when in cutting round the base of the growth the point of the knife snapped off, having touched something hard. The growth was successfully removed and taken to the pathological laboratory for microscopic examination, but the moment the pathologist attempted to cut across the tiny tumour he saw that no microscope was needed to diagnose that case, for the tumour was nothing less than a fine little diamond, which the native had passed into his ear to secrete. Nothing was said to Umzila till he recovered, and then he confessed that the drum of his ear had been ruptured purposely in his childhood, and that he had been in the habit of regularly hiding his stolen stones in the pouch which had gradually formed, probably by the weight of the diamonds.

Every surgeon who has been out in the diamond fields will tell of hiding places for diamonds which no white man would think of. Every possible cavity of the body is utilised, and many of the gems which adorn the highest in the land have had their sojourn in most revolting places; hence the search of the native labourers when they leave the fields has to be most severe and repulsive.

The price which the diamond runners obtain from the illicit buyers is trifling in comparison to the value of the stone, and one wonders that the Croo boys and Zulus will undergo so much torment and take such great risks to put money into the pockets of their unscrupulous employers.

More than one case is on record where Kaffir coolies have gone the length of cutting into the muscles of the thigh or arm and pushing the stones which they wished to smuggle out of the diggings into the cavity thus made. The pain must have been excruciating until the stone was removed, but there is little doubt that, though a few have been caught smuggling in this manner, many must have escaped unnoticed and thought the paltry price paid them for their services worth the agonies they endured.

But now science has come to the detective's aid, and smuggling in this fashion is becoming a thing of the past. The Röntgen rays enable the presence of a stone in any part of the body to be determined without the least trouble, and thus the nigger is checkmated.

The first case where the rays were employed for the purpose of the detection of crimes occurred in India last August. A very valuable diamond had been stolen and a hue and cry was raised. Suspicion was directed by a Babu named Runchorlal against a native of lower caste, called Motu, and the latter was brought before the assistant collector and charged with the offence. Motu protested his ignorance of the whole matter, and offered to submit to any search. Appearances were against him, and he was committed for trial at the next sessions. In the meantime Runchorlal was taken seriously ill, and went down to the Presidency Hospital at Calcutta, where his case was diagnosed as an ulcer in the stomach.

Wishing, however, to ascertain the extent of the ulcer before deciding what course to pursue, the doctors of the hospital had radiographs taken of his abdomen by the X rays, and when the plates were developed noticed a dark spot at the pyloric end of the organ, which certainly was a foreign body, while there was no trace of any other injury. Accordingly Runchorlal was put under chloroform and the foreign object removed. It was the missing diamond. Three weeks in hospital and three years in prison rewarded Runchorlal for his daring attempt to abscond with the jewel.

The police know perfectly well that there is in existence in Amsterdam a syndicate of diamond dealers who have regular employees in South Africa and elsewhere engaged in I.D.B., but they cannot stop them. To have a moral certainty, and to have direct proof are two different things, and all that can be done at present is to catch as many of the diamond smugglers as possible and punish them smartly. The time will come when no one will work for the syndicate, and as the gentlemen who form the combine of illicit buyers are the last people to take any personal risk themselves, the crime will then be less flourishing.

Red Hair.

MR. ELWORTHY, a well-known barrister of the period of the forties and fifties, had a rather browbeating demeanour and extremely red hair. The first was his fault, and the last his misfortune!

He was acting as prosecuting counsel on one occasion in a case of bigamy, and had to cross-examine an apparently truthful witness, whose visage was disfigured by a most painful squint.

"Be very careful how you reply to my questions, if you please," remarked the man in law. "I was taught, sir, by my father to be very careful in dealing with a man who squints."

This rude remark met with its own reward. "Funny!" said the witness innocently. "My mother warned me just the same about gents with red hair!"

Self-Convicted.

IN the year 1859, before Mr. Justice Adamson, at Ipswich, a man was tried for a very violent and apparently unprovoked assault. The prisoner hailed from Erin's Isle, and when asked in the usual way if he pleaded guilty or not guilty, he remarked confidently:

"Well, your honour, I didn't do it; but if you'd been in my place when Tim Reilly"—that was the victim of his attack—"says them things to me, you'd have done it, too, just the same as Oi did!"

This Paddy got time!

Murders at Rectories.

SEVERAL rectories in England have been the scenes of terrible crimes. Walter Miller murdered the Rev. Mr. Bloss and his housekeeper, Mrs. Huelin, at the vicarage of the former at Chelsea, not so many years ago, and was hanged for the deed. Miles Weatherill killed his sweetheart and the rector at the vicarage attached to the parish church at Todmorden, in Yorkshire. William Flack slew an old woman at Barton Rectory, in Suffolk, and was hanged at Ipswich; and there was also the well-remembered Framlingham Tragedy. At Little Stukely Rectory, near Huntingdon, occurred in the "twenties" of the last century the murder of the clergyman of the parish by Joshua Slade. The murder of an old woman at Kingswood Rectory, near Reigate, is not yet forgotten, though the actual criminals were never found.

Life of Charles Peace.

CHAPTER IX.

WE left Charles Peace hanging on to the parapet. The only thing he could do was to let go and drop on to the roof of one of the buildings, to avoid capture. The situation was desperate.

But, desperate as it was, he felt that the attempt must be made. He had by this time gone too far to recede. He let go his hold of the coping stone and dropped upon the slanting tiles of the house beneath. He alighted with comparative safety.

Sliding down the roof, he gained the gutter which ran round the house. Then he stooped down and hid himself behind the low wall in front of the gutter.

By this time the policeman and the night watchman were on the leads of the warehouse. He knew this, for he heard their voices distinctly in the night air.

"He's stepped it," said the watchman. "He's given us the slip after all our trouble, the audacious scoundrel."

Peace heard these observations, and remained as quiet as possible in his place of concealment.

"He's made off over the roofs of those houses," said one of the police officers.

"Impossible!" exclaimed the watchman. "No mortal man could reach them from where we are standing. Oh, no—impossible!"

"You don't know what these fellows can do," returned the constable. "They're like cats—they've got nine lives."

The speaker flashed his bull's-eye in all directions, but no burglar was visible.

Peace was stretched at full length in the gutter, and the low wall in its front effectually concealed him from observation.

But the situation in which he found himself was in no way a pleasant one; but he was as cunning and stealthy in his movements as an old fox. If he attempted to stir he knew that discovery was certain. He, therefore, remained speechless and motionless.

"Have you got such a thing as a ladder?" inquired one of the constables of the watchman.

"Yes, there is one in the yard. Why?"

"He's hiding somewhere on the top of yonder houses. We shall nail him yet if we can get a ladder."

"Come down to the yard at once, if you think that," said the watchman. "An excellent thought. Come this way."

The speaker and the two policemen retraced their steps, crept through the trap-door, and hastened towards the yard in search of the ladder.

Peace heard every word they had spoken, and was thereby apprised of their movements. He waited till he felt assured they had left the roof of the warehouse, then he peeped out from his hiding-place. Not a soul was to be seen.

Abutting out from the roofs of the row of houses on which he had so successfully dropped were a number of dormer windows, with lozenge-shaped panes. Peace crept along the gutter upon his hands and knees, and tried the first window he came to. It was fastened. He tried another with the same result.

Presently he discerned, at no very great distance off, the faint glimmer of a light from an adjacent window. He made for this at once. He opened it with the greatest care, and crept softly in

A young and pretty servant girl was partly undressed, and was about to retire to rest. She gave utterance to a faint scream as the burglar entered her sleeping chamber, and modestly covered her neck and shoulders, which were bare, with a shawl.

"For the love of mercy, how came you here, sir?" she inquired, in evident alarm.

"My dear young lady," said Peace, in his most persuasive tones, "do not be alarmed. Take pity on a poor fellow who seeks your protection."

"Protection! You must be some madman, or else—a—a burglar."

"I am neither. At the present moment I am in the depths of trouble. You can save me—you will, I am sure. You have a kind heart—I can see that by your face, which wears on it a sweet expression. Oh, do take pity on me."

He threw himself on his knees before her, and again pleaded in such an eloquent manner that the young woman was touched.

She hesitated, not very well knowing what answer to make to such an appeal.

"What trouble are you in, then?" said she.

"I've had a dispute, a quarrel; blows have been exchanged and, if I cannot escape from the officer who is after me, I'm a ruined man—ruined for life. You will have compassion on me. You cannot find it in your heart to refuse your aid to a distressed and afflicted man."

"What do you want me to do? If you are discovered here my character will be lost. Go—go at once, or I will call for assistance!"

"Nay, you cannot mean anything so cruel—I'm sure you cannot!" he exclaimed, in a beseeching tone.

"Will you go, sir?"

"Yes, if you will only show me the way. This little affair will blow over in a day or two. Matters can be arranged; but if I fall into the hands of the police, I'm lost. Now do you understand a miserable fugitive asking you to protect him? You cannot—you will not refuse."

"How can I protect you?"

"Simply by this. The police are on my track; let me out at the back door of the house; I can then make my escape. Now do you understand?"

"What have you been doing for the police to be after you?"

"I've told you. A quarrel—an assault."

"You are a very strange man. I do not understand how you came here."

"I'll tell you all another time. Show me the way to the back door, and I will go at once and trouble you no more. Quick, no time is to be lost. You will do this, and heaven will reward you. But stay—here is something as a recompense for this little favour."

He took a sovereign from his pocket, which he handed to the girl. She drew back indignantly.

"No, sir!" she ejaculated. "I'll have none of your money."

"Very well," he answered; "so be it. Trust me, I shall find the way of rewarding you some other time. Now let me out."

"I run great risks. Suppose my master or mistress should hear us descending the stairs."

"I will make no noise. They'll not hear us."

The girl took the light, and crept softly downstairs. Peace followed. The back door was soon unfastened, and the burglar imprinted a kiss on the hand of his benefactress.

"You can jump over the wall at the end of the garden and reach the court at the back," she whispered. "Now go."

She closed the door and refastened it; then she betook herself to the window of the back parlour, and saw her strange visitor jump over the wall into a neighbour's garden. He then climbed another wall, and gained a side street beyond.

She crept softly up the stairs and reached her own room without disturbing any of the other inmates of the house.

Meanwhile, the police officers had obtained a ladder from the adjoining yard; this they reared against the side of one of the houses which was in close proximity to the warehouse from which Peace had so successfully escaped.

The constables ascended the ladder and clambered over the roofs of the houses, but, as the reader may readily imagine, they were in no way successful in obtaining sight of the fugitive, who by this time was far away from the scene of action.

The policemen were much disconcerted, but were, however, not at all disposed to give up the search without further efforts.

They observed the glimmer of the light from the window of the servant girl's room; the latter had by this time re-

turned to her apartment in the roof, and was preparing for bed when she was startled by a loud rap at the window.

"Who's there, and what do you want?" said she in breathless accents.

"Open the casement—a burglar is in the house! Open at once!"

"Don't be afraid, girl; we belong to the police!"

"But I am very much afraid, and that's the truth," returned she, unfastening the window and throwing it wide open. "Good, kind gentlemen, for the love of mercy, tell me what's the matter?"

The constables made no reply, but sprang into the room. The girl drew back in undisguised alarm.

"It's most disgraceful to force an entrance into my bedroom—that's what it is!" she ejaculated petulantly.

"Now, young woman," said one of the constables, "answer me truthfully. Have you seen a man making his way over the roof?"

"Certainly not, with the exception of you and your companion; you are the only persons I have seen."

"No one has been here?"

"Why, goodness me, no! Haven't I told you so already?"

"You're quite sure of that?"

"Quite sure."

The policemen glanced round the apartment, looked under the bed, in the cupboard, and, in short, everywhere they could think of.

"Strange!" ejaculated policeman No. 1.

"Most remarkable!" returned No. 2. "Where can he be hiding?"

"Can't possibly tell." Then, turning to the girl, he said, "Hark ye, young woman. A burglary has been committed in the adjoining warehouse; the robber has escaped, and we have reasons for believing that he has sought shelter in this house."

"A burglary!" exclaimed the girl, giving utterance to a loud scream. "What have I done that I should be treated thus?" Having said this, she burst into tears.

The door of the bedroom was opened, and a tall gentleman, with a thick grey moustache, appeared with a drawn sword in his hand. He had hastily huddled on his clothes, and was swathed in a long dressing-gown.

For the rest, his countenance was indicative of rage and indignation. He was a retired Indian officer.

"What is this noise and altercation about?" cried the half-pay captain, regarding the constables with a malevolent look. "How is it that the sanctity of my private abode is thus violated? Speak!"

One of the policemen briefly explained the particulars of the attempted burglary and the remarkable escape of the robber.

"You have exceeded your duty. How dare you enter the maid's bedroom in this precipitate—this—ahem!—unseemly manner? Do you suppose for one moment that anyone belonging to my establishment would harbour burglars? I say you have gone beyond all reasonable limits, and—ahem!—I tell you frankly that the matter shall not rest here. An Englishman's house is his castle, and it is not to be invaded by the officers of the law without—I say without a reasonable excuse."

"I hope we have a reasonable excuse, sir."

"I say you have not! Don't contradict me, man; I will not condescend to bandy words with you. This matter shall be inquired into. What is your number?"

"46 T."

"Good!—and yours?" he inquired, turning to the other.

"49 T. But will you allow me to explain——"

"No, no; I will not! I don't want any explanation now. At a proper time and in a proper place you will have to account for this scandalous behaviour—forcibly entering a young girl's bedroom upon such a shallow pretext. I say it does not admit of explanation. I will answer for the honesty and integrity of this girl—let that suffice. Zounds! gunpowder and smoke! I am perfectly astounded at your audacity!"

46 T said he was exceedingly sorry that there should have been any misunderstanding, but they thought it probable the thief might have been seen passing the window.

"Ridiculous!—positively absurd!" ejaculated the choleric captain. "You are a pair of blundering idiots! The thief—if there be one, which I do not for a moment admit—would not be fool enough to enter a respectable house and arouse the inmates in his endeavour to escape. The idea is perfectly preposterous."

"It is most unfortunate that you view the matter in this light," said 46 T, "and I deeply regret that we should have offended you, sir, but it has been done in the exercise of our duty."

"Duty be hanged! A pretty story, truly, that you are to disturb people in the dead hours of the night, wake them from their peaceful slumbers, frighten the maid almost into hysterics upon the miserable plea that you thought the robber might have sought shelter here. I tell you, sir, that the very thought of such a thing is insulting to me and to all who dwell in this house."

While this altercation had been going on the girl had seated herself on the edge of the bed, and gave utterance to a series of sobs and hysterical cries.

"Don't you worry yourself, Mary. You've done nothing wrong, my poor girl," said her master in a kind tone of voice. "You've nothing to be ashamed of, or, indeed, to be alarmed at. Dry your eyes, girl, and be of good cheer."

"I'm sure—I—ha—ven't done anyone an—in—jury—and I don't know why I should be treated like this!"

"Don't fret yourself; nobody blames you," returned her master. "The righteous have naught to fear."

The captain strode towards the window, which he closed and fastened. He then threw up the shutters. This done, he turned towards the two constables, and said, as he approached the door:

"This way, if you please! It would be idle to prolong this scene. The maid wants to seek repose. She has been kept up later than usual in consequence of a few visitors we've had this evening. You will, therefore, please follow me."

The two policemen obeyed. The master of the house closed the door of the bedroom, and, with a light in one hand and the sword in the other, he led the way into a room below.

"Now, gentlemen" (he emphasised this last expression), "since you have taken upon yourselves to enter my premises as trespassers—I cannot call you anything else—I do not desire to part with you without first of all seeing that you search every room in the house."

The constables felt that they had made a great mistake; this fact they were forcibly impressed with, and they were seriously concerned at the issue:

"We don't desire to search!" stammered out one.

"I insist!" interrupted the captain. "There is now an imperative necessity for your doing so, and, further than that, I insist as a satisfaction to all parties."

The officers bowed. They were conducted by their guide into one room after the other. It is, perhaps, needless to say that everything was in the same order as when the occupants of the habitation had retired for the night.

Nothing was disturbed. There was not the faintest indication of any stranger or robber having entered the premises.

"You will, I'm sure, pardon us," observed one of the policemen. "We feel now that we have been too precipitate; but I hope you will consider, sir, that the reason for our being so was a desire to further the ends of justice. Mistakes will occur with the best and most cautious constables. I trust you will accept our apology and say no more about this error, for error it most assuredly is."

The captain was choleric, impetuous, but he was not vindictive. His anger passed away, and he was the chivalrous, generous, high-minded officer whom his worst enemies acknowledged to be a gentleman.

"Enough!" he observed. "You have been greatly mistaken, and I confess that I was greatly incensed, but that is over now. I am not the man to do anyone an injury for being over zealous in the discharge of what they deem their duty. You are satisfied that there is no robber lurking about here; I am satisfied that you did not mean to give offence. So let the matter be forgotten. Certainly it shall not be made public by me."

"We thank you, sir, most sincerely for your kindness and consideration!" exclaimed both constables. "We thank you again and again."

The gallant officer unbarred the front door of his habitation, bowed courteously to his companions, who returned the salutation, and passed into the house.

"We have made a pretty muddle of this business," said one of the constables to his companion; "what I call a regular muddle. It's lucky the old gentleman cooled down. I thought he meant reporting us."

"So he did at first, but he thought better of it."

"Ah! he's haughty, but he's a gentleman. But as to that slippery customer; how he has got clear off will, I fear, remain a mystery."

The night watchman remained outside of the captain's house near by for the constables, who, of course, informed him of all that had passed therein.

The policemen went back for the ladder, which they replaced in the yard.

The watchman was in no very good humour; he was suffering from the effects of the kick he had received from Peace while ascending the stairs.

Every bone in his body ached. In addition to this, he found that his right ankle was sprained, so, taken altogether, he was in no enviable plight.

CHAPTER X.

The notorious burglar whose deeds it is our purpose to chronicle during the progress of this work succeeded, as the reader has doubtless already surmised, in getting clear off. After scaling the two walls in the rear of the captain's house, he found himself in a narrow, unfrequented street, or, more properly speaking, court or alley.

He proceeded at once to make as much alteration in his appearance as possible. By the aid of his handkerchief and a little water he removed the stain from his face.

It has been asserted that he made use of walnut juice for the purpose of altering the hue of his skin.

This is a mistake. Walnut juice is not so easily removed. The pigment he employed was a finely-ground powder mixed with beer. This, when rubbed on the surface of the skin, gave him the appearance of a mulatto, and he had only to draw on a close-fitting black wig to make the disguise complete.

Peace, when representing a nigger on the stage, had, of course, to make up with burnt cork and beer, and it was this that first gave him the idea of using a brown powder in lieu of the cork to so successfully assume the appearance of a half-caste.

It had, moreover, this advantage: after his nocturnal depredations were over he could wash the colouring off his face in a few seconds and remove his wig. This done, Charles Peace was himself again.

The disguise was so perfect that detection or identification was almost impossible.

The stain, as we have already observed, was removed, the wig was taken off, the false arm removed, and Peace felt quite secure.

He walked gaily along in an easy, self-confident manner, not for a moment caring about a chance encounter with any member of the police force.

The self-possession and assurance of the man surpassed all belief.

He was, however, greatly chagrined at the unsuccessful nature of his raid upon the warehouse, and he could not disguise from himself that he had escaped almost by a miracle.

Nothing daunted, however, by his dangerous adventure, he walked gaily along till he reached one of the main streets of the town.

Here he was met by the two policemen who had made such a vain endeavour to capture him.

One of the constables flashed his bull's-eye full in the face of the burglar, who bore his scrutiny with the utmost complacence.

"You'll know me again the next time we meet," said Peace, with cool assurance.

"Maybe I shall," returned the constable. "Where are you coming from and where are you going?"

"That's my business; but, if you want to know, I'll tell you. I'm going to my own home, and I've been on a visit to a sick friend. You may as well know all. My name's Charles Peace; I'm a carver and gilder, and a musician to boot. Anything else you want to know?"

"Have you seen anyone pass as you came along?"

"Well, no one in particular. Oh, yes; there was a dark-looking man—a mulatto, he appeared to be, with one arm. He was running at the top of his speed."

"Which way did he go?" asked the policeman eagerly.

"He ran down that street—the second turning to the left."

"How long since?"

"Not a minute ago."

The two constables made off in the direction pointed out by Peace.

"Good!" ejaculated the latter, with a grin. "I hope you will find the gentleman!"

He walked on at a more rapid pace, and did not pause until he had reached his own habitation. He let himself in as usual with his latch-key, and crept softly upstairs.

For the next few days he worked industriously at his business, and behaved in a proper and discreet manner.

One or two of his friends, or rather patrons, paid him a visit, and gave him fresh commissions, and he deemed it advisable to keep as quiet as possible till the excitement consequent upon the attempt at burglary had somewhat subsided.

Like other affairs of a similar nature, it was but a nine days' wonder; the general impression being that it was the work of some tramp, who was in all probability a stranger in the town. Anyway, the aforesaid tramp was never discovered.

John Bristow, the man who occupied the parlours in the house where Peace lodged, had been for some days "on the drink." His poor wife, during this period, had had a sad time of it. Her husband neglected his work, drank to excess, and conducted himself in a manner which was almost intolerable.

Bessie Dalton strove in vain to pacify the brute, who came home in a furious state.

It would indeed be a terrible picture of man's brutality, and woman's forbearance, were we to record all that passed in the drunkard's miserable home.

One night Peace was aroused by piercing screams, which proceeded from Bristow's room.

"For mercy's sake, Charlie," said Bessie Dalton, "go down to that wretch; there'll be murder done. I'm sure there will if they go on like this."

"It's a thankless task to interfere between man and wife," answered Peace. "Best let them settle their own disputes."

"I tell you Bristow's mad, and knows not what he's doing. I cannot and will not remain quiet while this is going on. If you don't care about interfering, I will."

She rushed downstairs; Peace followed.

Bessie opened the door of the front parlour, and found the room in the utmost disorder. Chairs were overturned, and the lamp upset and broken.

Bristow had his fingers round his wife's throat, and appeared to be endeavouring to throttle her.

"You inhuman monster!" exclaimed Bessie, catching hold of the back part of the collar of the man's coat and dragging him back with all her force.

"Now, look here, Bristow," said Peace, "don't be a fool. You've got a good wife, and you don't know how to treat her. A man's a coward who lays his hand upon a woman."

"Ish he?" returned the ruffian, turning savagely upon the speaker—"ish he? Then I'll lay my hands upon a man, that I may teach him to mind his own bushnis."

Having given utterance to these words, he sprang upon Peace like a wild beast.

The latter deftly slipped out of his grasp, and gave him a push, which sent him sprawling backwards.

He rose to his feet, and was about to commence another attack, when Bessie Dalton, who was a lion-hearted little girl, threw herself between the two combatants.

"I'm not afraid of you, big as you are," said Bessie. "So if you want to hit anyone, hit me."

With a look of drunken stupidity Bristow poised himself on his legs, which, to say the least, were particularly shaky at this time, and contemplated the girl with something like admiration.

"Thee bee'st a plucky 'un, thersh no denying that. I don't want to harm 'ee——"

"I wish I was a big, strong man," exclaimed Bessie, in a spiteful tone. "That's what I wish."

"And why, my pretty little spitfire?" inquired Bristow.

"I'd give you a good thrashing, that's all."

"Ah, indeed! Then I'm glad you're not."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Bristow; upon my word, you are a disgrace to the neighbourhood," said Peace.

"Am I?" said the man, with a short jerk of his body, and a stupid nod of his head; "a dishgrace, eh?"

"Certainly you are; everybody says so."

"Look here, I ain't a-goin' to stand any o' your cheek, blow me if I do—no, nor any of your preaching either. What are you, I should like to know?"

"A thousand times better than you are!" exclaimed Bessie Dalton.

"Ish he?" This was said in a drawling tone and jeering manner."

"Yes, he is."

"I'm not so sure about it. Why, Lord love yer, gal, don't ye know what he ish? A burglar! Do ye hear? A burglar!"

Had a bombshell exploded in the room it could not possibly have caused greater consternation than did this declaration.

Peace was pale with rage.

"You infamous liar!" he exclaimed, in a voice of concentrated passion, walking up to the speaker and shaking his fist in his face.

"Were it not that I respect your poor, ill-used wife—were it not that you are in a beastly state of intoxication, I would fell you to the earth."

Bristow laughed derisively.

"You—you fell me to the earth," he repeated, in a sneering tone.

Peace by this time was wild with fury.

Seeing that a desperate scene of violence was likely to take place, Mrs. Bristow flung herself in front of her husband, and said, in a deprecating tone:

"John—John, for mercy's sake do not make so foul a charge!" Then, turning to Peace, she murmured, "Take no notice of what he says, Mr. Peace. Do not heed his words. He knows not what he's saying."

"Don't I?" returned Bristow, with another jerk and a nod. "Don't I? I ain't to be gammoned if you are. I know my way about."

"Silence! Hold your tongue, John. Do be quiet!"

"You think I'm a fool, I 'spose, eh?" said Bristow, in continuation. "How about that young swell—that lad of a chap as comes here? Be he arter you or Bessie? I'm a fool, am I?"

"Now, then," said the constable, "let's have no more of this or I'll lock you both up."

He parted the two combatants, who stood glaring at one another like two wild animals.

"He took me unawares, and gave me a prop atween the eyes," said Bristow, who was by this time a little sobered.

"He's been beating his wife, the wretch," said Bessie Dalton. "Been trying to throttle her."

"Do you charge him?" inquired the policeman of Mrs. Bristow.

"Oh, dear, no. He was not sober at the time. I don't want anyone to be charged."

"I told yon chap that he were a burglar, and he didn't like to hear the truth," ejaculated Bristow, with a chuckle.

"The man's mad drunk, he's been creating a disturbance the whole of the evening, and, because we came into the room to prevent murder being done, he's been as insulting as possible," said Peace. "He ought to be locked up to prevent him from doing further mischief."

"I WOULD FELL YOU TO THE EARTH!"

"Abuse me as much as you like; I am used to it, but don't take away other persons' characters," ejaculated the miserable wife.

"Oh, Mr. Peace, he'll be sorry for what he's said to-morrow. Take no notice of him. Pray don't, for my sake."

"For your sake I would do much; but he will have to answer for this; not now, perhaps, for he is not sober, but he will have to answer for it, and that he will soon know, to his cost."

"Shall I? Oh, very good. I'll answer for it whenever you like."

"John, be quiet," urged the unhappy wife.

"Well, then, send for something to drink."

"You've had enough."

"Have I? Then I'll have more!" exclaimed Bristow, rising from his chair and staggering towards the door. "Who's got any money? Have you got any, Mr. Burglar?"

Peace, who was standing near the door, lost all command over his temper. He struck the man a terrible blow between the eyes which felled him like an ox.

The women screamed with fright.

A policeman, who was passing, entered the parlour, and found Peace and Bristow wrestling like two athletes.

"Will anyone charge him?" asked the constable.

"No, there's no charge, policeman," answered Mrs. Bristow quickly.

"Well, I'll tell you what it is, if I hear any more noise or row, I'll lock you up upon my own responsibility." This last speech was addressed to Bristow.

"All right; now we understand one another," answered the latter, in the same sneering tone which he had adopted during the whole of the evening. He was maudlin drunk, mischievously disposed, and tantalising.

"I'll have no more to say to the worthless vagabond," remarked Peace, preparing to leave. "You must use your own discretion in dealing with him, but before I go I must tell you that he is a dangerous character, and a nuisance to the house, and, indeed, to the whole neighbourhood," and with these words our hero strode out of the apartment, being in no way disposed to prolong a scene which might compromise him.

He felt that the time had arrived for him to beat a retreat; he adopted this course from strategic reasons. There was no telling what further might fall from the lips of Bristow, who was evidently mischievously disposed. Peace, therefore, made for his own apartments upstairs.

Bessie Dalton, however, chose to remain in the parlour to defend her friend, Mrs. Bristow, or Sophy, as she called her.

The policeman, who was a very efficient and worthy member of the force, gave the inebriate a long lecture. He was well acquainted with the character of the latter, as disturbances and scenes of violence were unhappily but too frequent.

After the departure of Peace, Bristow toned down. He said to the constable that he had been a little hasty—had been, in fact, worried about one or two matters within the last few days; but that he was sorry he had lost his temper. He could see it all now as plainly as a book; still, at the same time, he declared "that he was not going to stand any more of that fellow's cheek."

Of course he alluded to Peace, from whose blow he was still smarting. Indeed, one of his eyes was blackened, although probably he was not aware of this at present.

The policeman, after a few more words of warning, left the two women and Bristow to settle their differences as best they could.

Soon after this Bristow went to bed, and in a few minutes was sleeping soundly. The house was quiet for the remainder of the night.

CHAPTER XI.

The words that had fallen from Bristow could not be forgotten by Peace, who began to be seriously concerned. He was quite unable in any way to account for the expressions made use of by the ruffian in the parlour.

From whence could he have obtained his information?

Had it been noised abroad that Peace was the man who effected an entrance into the warehouse, or had Cooney been in the town and split upon him?

Some mysterious agency had been at work.

Bristow could not have dreamt that he was a burglar. He was too besotted and stupid a man to divine it from anything he had seen. Somebody must have given him secret information. These thoughts passed rapidly through the brain of our hero.

"This place is becoming too hot for me," murmured Peace, while working in his shop in the back yard.

"Some enemy is at work, and to remain here much longer would simply be an act of madness. No, I must away, and that, too, as speedily as possible, but I will not let anyone know my intentions—no, not even Bessie. That Bristow is a dangerous fellow—when the drink is in him he cares not what he says."

Peace had concealed in his rooms a number of valuable articles which were the proceeds of his burglaries. He did not care about running any risk by disposing of the same in Bradford; neither did he feel disposed to leave anything behind when he quitted the town. He therefore packed them as closely as possible in a hair trunk which he had procured for the purpose.

All this was done as quickly and secretly as possible while Bessie Dalton was away at the mill where she worked. When she came home in the evening she found Peace busily occupied in the shop with his picture frames. He appeared to be as cheerful as usual, but he was maturing his plan of operations.

On the following morning he paid the landlord his rent, together with the amount due for the week's notice, alleging that he had just received a telegram announcing the fact that his mother was in London dangerously ill, and that he was therefore compelled to hasten to her bedside without further delay.

The landlord did not for a moment doubt the truth of this statement.

Peace put his traps in a fly he had hired, and was driven to the station. He took the first train to London, arriving in the metropolis in the early part of the afternoon.

A four-wheeled cab conveyed him to Whitechapel.

In that classic locality dwelt a Jew with whom Peace was well acquainted. He had on more than one occasion disposed of his ill-gotten wares to the Israelite in question.

The Jew was called "Cunning Isaac" by the professional gentlemen who had dealings with him.

Peace was driven to a coffee-shop, near to the Jew's residence.

Here he engaged a bed, his trunks were safely deposited in the back room; he had some coffee in the public room, and in the dusk of the evening he proceeded to the Jew's house, carrying with him in a large bag the greater portion of the property he had brought with him.

"Ah, Mishter Peace, your servant! I'm happy and proud to see you. Vat can I do for you? Have you anything in my vay? Bishness is bad—wery bad, it ish. Nothing stirring but stagnation, as our friend O'Callaghan used to say."

"You just stop your clatter, Isaac, and don't call me by my name in a public shop. What I have to say to you must be said in your own private room."

"Chertainly, my tear friend, chertainly! This way, it you please."

The burglar was conducted into a large back room, which presented the appearance of an old curiosity shop. It was crammed full of articles of almost every conceivable description.

"There now, take a chair, and make yourself at home. I'm happy and proud to see you!" ejaculated the Jew, rubbing his hands together.

"There's quite enough of that. You're about as glad to see me as I am to see you," observed Peace.

"Vell, then, ve von't say any more about it. Let's to bishness. You've got something for me, I dare say."

His visitor opened his bag, and placed a number of articles on the table.

These consisted of gold trinkets of various descriptions, silver plate, spoons, forks, and fruit knives, but more noticeable than all the rest was the massive silver cup which the burglar had purloined from the mill-owner's residence at Dudley Hill.

On this was engraved the owner's name, and the inscription signified that it had been presented to the master by the work-people employed in his establishment.

The Jew examined each article separately, and shook his head in a deprecating manner as some of them came under his inspection. This was a way he had so that he might thereby depreciate them in the eyes of the party who offered them for sale. Some young hands were taken in by his manner, which, to say the truth, was never very encouraging.

"Oh, I see—plated!" he would ejaculate when handling a genuine silver article, which he would push on one side as worthless. These little pleasantries were habitual with him.

It is a well-known fact to those who are acquainted with the subject that the burglar or thief never realises half—nor, indeed, in many instances, a third—of the value of the property he purloins.

The sacrifice he has to make in obtaining ready cash for the same is enormous. The Jew "fence," as he is termed, who purchases the goods obtains by far the largest booty, and this is done with but little risk. The receivers, as a rule, are seldom captured and brought to justice, it being at all times most difficult to prove their guilt.

"Well," said Peace, after the Jew had finished his scrutiny of the various articles, "will they suit you?"

"Umph! there are some good things among them, but ash to the others, vell, I don't care much about them."

"Don't have them, then," returned his companion.

"I'll have them all at a price."

"Yes, I understand what that means—at your price, about a quarter of their value."

The Jew regarded the speaker with a half-angry glance.

"I give the utmost I can afford at all times—to my friends especially. Indeed, Mishter Peace, I often lose by my purchases. Bishness ish pad; there are no buyers; money is tight. You don't know how hard it is to get rid of goods, some especially. Now, there's that presentation cup—vat can I do with it? See the risk I run in——"

"Get out!" cried Peace testily. "Put it in the melting-pot, risk be hanged! You can't gammon me, you old sinner!"

"Oh, Lord! to hear him talk, it's as good as a play!" said the Jew once more rubbing his hands together. Then, suddenly changing his tone, he said:

"Tell ye vat I'll do; give you fifty pounds for the lot."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure. Fifty pounds for goods that are worth a hundred and fifty in weight of the silver alone!"

"Ah! but you forget the solder—you never thought of the solder! Besides, I must have some little profit. I can't live on air."

Peace knew perfectly well, when he paid a visit to the establishment, that there would be a long time lost in haggling before he could get a moderately fair offer from Isaac. He had come prepared for this.

"I won't take fifty or anything like it," said Peace, putting some of the articles back in his bag.

"Yer won't, eh?"

"I know where I can get more, and not far from here, either."

"Vere ish it? Tell us vere it ish. Vill he puy of me?"

"I'm not going to let you know where it is."

"Vill you take sixty? There's a good offer. I shall lose by them."

Peace shook his head. No, he would not take sixty.

Ultimately a bargain was struck, and Peace accepted seventy-five pounds for the articles, and he esteemed himself particularly fortunate in realising that sum.

"Ah, that's a pad job about the 'Badger,' a very pad job. Poor fellow, he vos bowled out at last."

"He was too headstrong. It was partly his own fault, so I've been told," remarked Peace, as he passed out of the shop.

He slept that night at the coffee-house, and on the following morning took the train to his native town—Sheffield.

He called on his mother, and found her in her accustomed health and spirits. It is said that he was her favourite son, but we have no positive proof of this.

Soon after his arrival in Sheffield he wrote a letter to Bessie Dalton, in which he informed her that he had left Bradford for very excellent reasons—the place had become too hot for him, and a change of air was necessary for his health. This, he asserted, was his only reason for leaving—his love for her (Bessie) was as strong as ever. Nevertheless, there was an imperative necessity for them to be separated for a while.

He, however, sent her a small sum of money occasionally, and bade her keep up her spirits until they met again.

He had brought with him a sum which would suffice to keep him for some little time, and before this became exhausted he knew pretty well how to obtain more, but for some weeks after his arrival in his native town he was much more careful than he had been heretofore.

He picked up a very decent living by playing the violin at various houses of public entertainment in the town, and, to all appearance, he was a well-behaved, proper sort of young man enough.

It was shortly after his return to Sheffield that he became enamoured of a young girl. This, the first, and, indeed, only, honourable attachment he ever had for one of the opposite sex, was not crowned with success.

The circumstances connected with the life of the object of his new-formed attachment are of a nature singularly romantic, and as our history progresses her career, as shadowed forth in this work, will form a touching episode in the drama of every-day life.

There resided in the town of Sheffield at this time a widow lady, named Maitland. She was possessed of a small income, and led a quiet life. Peace, who had been introduced to her by one of the neighbours, was anxious to improve the acquaintance, his reason for this being a sudden passion for her daughter Aveline.

When once bent on any object he was not a man to be easily thwarted.

Aveline Maitland was possessed of no inconsiderable share of beauty. She was exquisitely formed, graceful, with small, delicately-chiselled features, which were singularly sweet in their expression. Taken altogether, there was an air of refinement about her that might well inspire any man with the master passion.

It is somewhat singular that such a radiant, fair young creature should have touched the heart of a man of so coarse a mould as Charles Peace.

But so it was. He saw her by chance at her mother's residence, and he was struck with her grace and beauty.

Her influence over him was so powerful that for a short time he became quite an altered man. He dressed with scrupulous care, was soft and gentle, and indeed it might be said winning in his manner.

Aveline Maitland, utterly unconscious of the fact that she had made a conquest of her mother's visitor, treated him with courtesy, and conversed freely with him upon the various topics of the day.

Mrs. Maitland gave a party one evening. Peace, who heard of this, volunteered to play the violin to the dancers.

The widow availed herself of his services, and he made himself particularly agreeable to all the guests.

After this he procured a box at the theatre, and escorted the widow and her daughter. During the performance he was most polite and attentive to both the females.

It was a source of great trouble to him, however, that the fair Aveline did not offer him any encouragement. On the contrary, he could not conceal from himself that she was cold and distant.

Nevertheless, he did not despair. It is an old adage that "faint heart never won fair lady." Peace was mindful of this. Most assuredly his was not a faint heart at any period of his career.

He was determined to woo and win Aveline. This time he was desperately in love, but there is another declaration made by a great poet, namely, "The course of true love never did run smooth." It would be hardly worth while to make an effort to ascertain whether Peace's passion for the fair Aveline could be included in the category of "true love"; there was so little truth about the man throughout the whole of his sinful life that the reader will find it difficult to believe his being inspired with a pure and holy love for one of the opposite sex.

One thing, however, is quite certain—he believed himself to be desperately in love, and comported himself in much the same way as other mortals do under similar circumstances.

"What is love?"

The fevered head, the palpitating heart, the visions beautiful and young, clothing our every day in a transient paradise, when the voice is heard deliciously exulting, or weeping passionately loud into the pillowed night.

Is this love? Slim girlhood answers yes. Or is it the interchange of soul and soul, of which all life is typical? A staff in the traveller's hand, music to the soldier's march. Ah! such is love, sweet love!

Peace, as we have already seen, was a man of action. He was not one to beat about the bush or let the grass grow under his feet, and in a very short time after his introduction to Mrs. Maitland and her charming daughter he determined upon making a declaration to the latter of his undying and unfading love.

He had before this presented Mrs. Maitland with a handsome timepiece, the frame of which was most elaborately and beautifully carved by his own hands.

He had in his possession a ring set with diamonds, rubies, and other precious stones. This he purposed presenting to the daughter upon the first opportunity that occurred.

The widow's cottage stood on the outskirts of the town of Sheffield. In the rear of the habitation was a small but well cultivated garden. In this, one fair spring morning, Aveline Maitland was to be seen. She was seated in an alcove, or summer-house, as it was termed, reading.

Charles Peace, who had been watching her from the road, thought this a favourable opportunity.

He unfastened the wicket gate by the side of the garden and entered.

His manner was soft and gentle. Taking off his hat, he paid his respects to the widow's daughter, who rose from her seat and shook him by the hand.

"Pardon me, Miss Maitland, for this intrusion upon your privacy, but I have that to say which cannot possibly remain any longer unsaid."

The young lady regarded the speaker with a look of surprise, and requested him to be seated.

Peace proceeded:

"In the first place, I have a favour to ask which I hope—nay, I feel convinced—you will not refuse."

"What is its nature?" inquired his companion.

"I wish you to accept this little present," said he, drawing forth the ring; "to accept it as a token in remembrance of me."

"Sir!" exclaimed Aveline. "Mr. Peace, you greatly surprise me!"

"You are not offended, I hope?"

"No, certainly not; and I hope you will not be offended when I say I could not think of accepting it."

Peace's brow darkened. To say the least of it, this was a bad beginning. He did not press the question.

"Miss Maitland," he said, in continuation, "you will, I hope, not object to hear what I have to say?"

She signified, by an inclination of the head, that he might proceed.

"Well," said Peace, "I don't know whether you have been able to divine my feelings, or to guess the secret which is locked up in my heart; but I feel that the time has come for me to be outspoken. From the very first moment I saw you but one absorbing thought haunted me. A mighty and overpowering passion took possession of me, and held me in bondage. As time went on it became more intensified. Take pity on me!"

"Pity, and for what?"

"I am your slave, your devoted slave. It is little to say, perhaps, that I never knew what love was till I saw you."

His companion gave utterance to a cry of surprise, or it might be alarm

"Ah, my dear young lady, if you only knew how, sleeping or waking, your image is before me, if you only knew——"

"Enough of this," cried Aveline; "we are not on the stage playing two parts in a fashionable melodrama; you must be less demonstrative."

"I will, as it so pleases you. Listen. I have money

at my command sufficient to supply you with every ease or luxury you may desire. Only give me hope—do not drive me to despair. I love you so much that it would be indeed a blessing to devote my whole life to you. Tell me—may I hope?"

"Hope what?"

"That you will look with favour on me."

"Mr. Peace, I have already signified that you surprised me—now I am fairly astonished. What am I to understand by the words you have been uttering?"

"I desire you to accept me as a suitor for your hand, and on a future day I hope to become your husband."

Miss Maitland rose from her seat.

"There must be an end of this," she said, with something like anger depicted on her beautiful features.

"You refuse, then—you doom me to perpetual misery?"

"I don't know what you mean by perpetual misery, but I must tell you frankly that I feel it my duty to at once declare that I cannot for a moment receive you as a suitor,

"I do not feel myself bound to answer such a question," returned his companion, in a tone of offended dignity. "Neither do I think our relative positions entitle you to interrogate me thus, I might say, rudely. Our interview is at an end."

She moved towards the house.

"I hope we part friends? You're not offended with me?"

"Well, no; but I think you have acted without due consideration. There has never been anything in my manner or bearing towards you to warrant this familiarity. But let that pass. I bear you no ill-will. On the contrary, I hope and trust you will see the mistake you have made, and so farewell."

She offered her hand to Peace, who took it and raised it to his lips.

She withdrew it somewhat hastily, and walked with rapid strides towards the back door of the cottage.

Peace found himself alone.

"I WILL BE YOUR DEVOTED SLAVE!"

and once and for all I bid you never again to allude to this subject."

Peace was miserably disappointed. He felt humiliated. The reception he had met with was in every way unsatisfactory. He did, in his way, really love the young woman to whom he had made so sudden and unexpected a declaration.

Her candour and prompt answers cut him to the quick.

He had no right to expect a young lady, who was so immeasurably superior to himself, to treat him in any other way than she had done; but the audacity, assurance, and conceit of the man were beyond all bounds.

He had hoped to carry the fortress by storm, but the attempt turned out an ignominious failure.

"I cannot tell you, Miss Maitland, how supremely wretched you have made me," said Peace.

"I am sorry to give pain to anyone, but at the same time I have felt it my bounden duty to be explicit. You have my answer. Let me beg of you, as a personal favour, Mr. Peace, not to ever again refer to this subject."

"May I inquire the cause of this aversion, if I may so term it? Is there a rival in the case?"

He had some difficulty in mastering his feelings. Rage and despair seemed to have seized him, and had he not respected Aveline Maitland as much or, indeed, more than he admired and loved her, the probability is that he would have burst out in one of those violent fits of passion which he generally displayed when thwarted in any object upon which he had set his heart.

But there was something so polished in the manner of the young girl that he was in a measure disarmed and held in bondage while in her presence.

After the departure of Miss Maitland, Peace remained for a few minutes like one stupefied.

He presently recovered himself, and walked slowly along the gravel path in the garden until he had reached the gate. He opened it, passed through, and crept down the lane which skirted the side entrance of the widow's residence.

He cast one long lingering look at the cottage, heaved a deep sigh, and walked on with accelerated speed.

"I've been too precipitate," he ejaculated, as he proceeded along; "much too precipitate, and by my rashness have lost the only woman I ever loved—the only woman! How could I have been such a fool? Not, perhaps, that she would

have been persuaded to listen to my suit, in any case; but I have thrown away whatever little chance I had. Well, she gave me a plain and positive answer. And it's likely enough that someone else is after her."

As this thought passed through his brain he uttered curses loud and deep.

Crestfallen, and in a state bordering on distraction, he reached Sheffield, where he joined a lot of boon companions, in whose company he vainly strove to drown the sorrow which weighed so heavily upon his heart.

For the next few days he was in a state of nervous excitement. He could not forget the words that had fallen from the lips of Aveline.

Did she suspect aught? Had some mischievous busybody been speaking against him? It was likely enough. There must have been some powerful influence at work. The more he reflected upon the subject the more he felt assured that someone had given her a timely caution. Who could it be?

He ferreted about in all quarters; made inquiries of a number of persons, but was in on way successful.

One day, while traversing the lane, he heard voices in the garden; they proceeded from the other side of the hedge which skirted the grounds.

Peace came to a halt, listened most attentively. He could hear the low, musical tones of Aveline, and hear also the voice of a man in close converse with her. His heart beat audibly, his pulse quickened.

"She has someone with her," he murmured.

Moved by a sudden impulse, he crept by the side of the fence until he had gained the extreme end of the garden. A quickset hedge ran along this, through the interstices of which Peace was able, unobserved, to obtain a view of the summer-house, upon which his eyes were now riveted.

He saw Aveline Maitland seated therein. By her side was a tall, handsome young man, whose looks denoted the state of his heart. He was whispering loving words to her—so Peace imagined, and was by no means mistaken.

Peace's brain seemed to be on fire, his knees knocked together, and his whole frame shook with ill-suppressed passion.

"Tom Gatliffe, as I'm a living man!" he exclaimed. "He, then, is my rival, the sneaking hound! Ah, if I had only known this before!"

Peace became furious as he gazed upon the loving pair; nevertheless, he found it impossible to leave the spot. The foliage behind which he hid was sufficiently dense to screen him, but even if this had not been the case, he was wound up to such a state of desperation that he would not have much cared had the faithless Aveline and her companion become aware of his position behind his leafy screen.

Indeed, the thought crossed his mind more than once of emerging from his place of concealment and confronting them. But, upon second consideration, he came to the conclusion that no possible good could result from such a course of action, and therefore determined to keep where he was till the interview was over. He would watch and wait.

The conversation was carried on between the two for some time, after which they both rose and walked slowly towards the house.

Peace was not sufficiently near to hear a word they said, but he judged, rightly enough, that their discourse was a pleasant one—being, in fact, made up of those airy nothings which are the golden dreams of life's morning.

The situation in which he found himself was, to say the least of it, a most trying one—it would have proved to be so to the most apathetic, but to a man of Peace's temperament it was all but insupportable.

"She can be haughty and distant enough when it suits her purpose, the deceitful minx," he ejaculated, with bitterness; "but at other times she can be all honey. Bah! a plague on them both! That mealy-mouthed Tom Gatliffe, with his fine set speeches and goody-goody manner, has turned the gal's head—that is the reason of her flouting me the other day."

The lovers now entered the cottage, and Peace crept along the side of the hedge till he had reached the lane.

He sat down on a neighbouring stile and began to reflect—if a chaotic mass of fugitive thoughts rushing through an overheated brain can be called reflection.

What should he do? How should he be avenged?

Was it possible to break the golden fetters which bound the two together.

He had known Tom Gatliffe from boyhood; indeed, at one time they were schoolfellows. He was jealous of him even in those early days, for Tom was a diligent pupil, and in every way so superior to Peace that as a natural consequence they were never at any time what might be called pals.

"He was always a proud, conceited upstart," exclaimed Peace. "Always thought a deal of himself, and went in for the virtuous, and looked down upon me with something like contempt. That was bad enough, but worse has followed—he's stolen from me the only girl I ever loved. I hate the fellow, curse him!"

He rose from his seat and walked rapidly down the lane, muttering anathemas against Gatliffe and all his belongings. This did not appear to satisfy him, so he turned round and retraced his steps.

He had no settled or defined purpose in so doing, and, indeed, he hardly knew why he turned back, unless it was occasioned by a reluctance to lose sight of the cottage in the occupation of the widow.

He was so restless, so little himself, that he acted altogether in an erratic way.

In the course of ten minutes or so he caught sight of a solitary figure at the extreme end of the lane.

Peace came to a sudden halt; to all appearance from what he could make out the solitary messenger was none other than the detested Tom Gatliffe.

In a minute or so after this he felt assured of this fact; with rapid strides the young man hastened along.

Peace waited; this was just what he desired. His face was distorted with passion, and wore on it a demoniacal expression.

Heedless of the coming storm young Gatliffe walked merrily along until he caught sight of the malevolent countenance of his quarrelsome schoolfellow.

"Ugh! it's you, is it?" said Peace, with inexpressible disgust, both in his tone and manner; "you, eh?"

"What's the matter, my friend?" inquired Tom.

"Friend be hanged," answered Peace, "you're no friend of mine. What do you do crawling about here? Tell me that."

"Upon my word, Peace, you conduct yourself in a strange manner. Has anyone offended you?"

"Never you mind whether they have or not; you are lurking about here for no good purpose. Where have you come from?"

"Well, from the house of a friend of mine."

"You are full of friends—everybody's your friend, I s'pose. Is your friend's name Maitland?"

"You are quite correct in your surmise—it is."

"I thought so, and I suppose, if I may make so bold as to inquire, it is not so much the widow who has attracted you to the house as the daughter?" This was said in a tone of bitter irony.

"What if I refuse to answer impertinent questions?"

"You will refuse. You dare not answer them—you're a mischief-making, lying, canting humbug. It is you, and none but you, who have poisoned the mind of Miss Maitland against me—Charles Peace—do you hear?"

Tom Gatliffe was perfectly astounded. As Peace gave utterance to these last words, his countenance seemed to darken with the darkness of a curse.

"Look here," said Gatliffe, in a more serious tone, "for the life of me I do not understand what you mean; but I tell you frankly that I am not disposed to be insulted and abused—the more so since I have not by word or deed done you the slightest harm."

"It's a lie—a miserable lie!" yelled Peace, poking his face forward towards the speaker, and making a hideous grimace.

"Are you mad? What on earth possesses you?" inquired the other.

"Haven't you just left Miss Maitland?" cried Peace.

"Suppose I have—what's that to you?"

"Oh—oh—what is it to me! Why, only this—she looked with eyes of favour on me until you set her against me."

With these words he rushed at Gatliffe like a wild beast. He wound his fingers around his throat and endeavoured to throttle him.

In his fury he foamed at the mouth; and, had he been possessed of a weapon, doubtless something serious would have happened.

Gatliffe was a tall, athletic young man, who, in fair fight, would be able to overcome Peace with the greatest ease.

He caught Peace round the waist, lifted him up, and threw him from him with the greatest ease.

Peace picked himself up and rushed forward again at his antagonist, who by this time had become a little angry.

He delivered a well-directed blow on his opponent's chest, which knocked him backwards.

(To be continued.)

THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF Mr. Archibald McNiell.

"You say he died?
There is no doubt he died—
No doubt, my Lord; then I would ask you how,
Yes, how he died?"

—MELVILLE'S PLAY, "The Guilty Man." (1829).

FEW cases of mysterious deaths have caused such a sensation in the literary world as that of Mr. Archibald McNiell, whose dead body was found on the sands at Boulogne on Thursday, January 5, 1888, after he had been missing for about two weeks—since December 20 of the previous year. The particulars of the case are as follow: Mr. Archibald McNiell, a journalist of unusual ability, was despatched by the editor of the "Sportsman" to furnish a description of the proceedings, surroundings, and what may be termed the outside incidents of, the prize fight between Jem Smith and Jake Kilrain, which took place at Rouen on Monday, December 19. He received his instructions on Saturday afternoon, December 17, 1887, and on the following day left London in apparently the best of health for France. He was greatly excited at the prospect of witnessing a prize fight, which was to him a novel experience. He thought little of the danger, as he had all his life been a man of the highest courage, who delighted in performing deeds of daring. It was his boast that he had on one occasion gone down with an exploring party after an explosion in a fiery mine at Barnsley, when he represented the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle"; and on another occasion he ascended in a balloon from the Dudley Castle Grounds, Worcestershire, and made a lengthy voyage over the Midland counties. Subsequently he went out on a stormy sea in an open boat to convey provisions to a beleaguered party in the lighthouse on Holy Island, off the Northumbrian coast. This proves that McNiell was not deficient in courage, and though at the time of his death there were some cruel rumours circulated to the effect that he had been compelled by his employers to attend the fight against his will, there was absolutely no foundation for such rumours, his journey being perfectly optional.

On Monday, December 19, Mr. McNiell despatched several telegrams from Paris to his paper in London, giving certain information which fully accorded with his instructions. On Tuesday morning, it appears, he left Paris by the 9.40 express, in company with a large number of people who had attended the fight, and he was seen at Amiens by several persons, who thought that he was looking ill, haggard, and flushed. At Boulogne he went on board the steamboat, where he deposited his luggage and a rug belonging to one of his colleagues. For some reason or other, which will probably never be known, he left the boat and went on shore. Forty-five minutes after the steamer had left he sent a telegram to his editor, saying that he had missed the boat. He did not, however, turn up at the office on the following day, and when Thursday night came grave apprehensions were entertained that something might be wrong. One of his brothers went over to Boulogne, and endeavoured to trace him, but his efforts were futile.

Subsequently an American gentleman, Mr. H. S. Welcome, a very close friend of the missing man, went over provided with photographs and other clues to continue the search. Later, a very smart London detective—Mr. Stammers—was commissioned by the members of the Savage Club, of which coterie Mr. McNiell was a popular member, to thoroughly search out the tantalising mystery. Mr. David Christie Murray, the well-known novelist, and an old friend of Mr. McNiell's, instituted an inquiry on French soil on his own account. These united efforts resulted in the unearthing of the most extraordinary stories in reference to the missing man. The staff of the Paris edition of the "New York Herald" entered into the matter with characteristic energy, and having obtained, as they thought, a clue through the medium of a barmaid at a Parisian restaurant, they followed it up to the letter.

News received on the morning of January 5, 1888, however, showed that the whole of their theories were unfounded. Telegrams came to hand to the effect that the body of the unfortunate journalist had been discovered, washed ashore in the outer harbour at Boulogne. The corpse was at once identified by the detective Stammers, who was in possession of every possible means of recognising the deceased, including a piece of the cloth of the overcoat he wore. The latter clue was very important, as it consisted of a tab for buttoning on to the collar of the ulster. The deceased journalist had evidently removed this piece from the pocket to his bag, which, by the way, came up as "lost luggage" to Cannon Street Station.

A later telegram read: "Mr. McNiell's body was found this morning on the western beach of the deep-sea harbour, and was taken to the Morgue. A summary examination disclosed no signs of foul play, but the forehead is much bruised, owing, apparently, to coming in contact with the rocks." Later in the afternoon the following telegram was received through Reuter's Agency:

"The body of Mr. McNiell, who has been missing since the 20th ult., was washed ashore on the western sands this morning. An examination of the body has revealed marks of strangulation on the neck, which, taken together with the fact that the deceased's cash, notes, and watch are missing, renders it evident that Mr. McNiell was the victim of foul play. The remains were in a very decomposed state, having apparently been in the water for about eight days. A one-franc piece was found on the shore at some distance from the spot to which the body had drifted."

The proprietors of the "Sportsman" at once made arrangements to despatch to Boulogne a representative, armed with authority to thoroughly probe the matter to the bottom. Mr. H. S. Welcome also decided to again cross the Channel in the interests of his dead friend, and he, with Mr. Horace Lennard, a firm friend of the family, and Mr. Hector McNiell, a brother of the deceased, left Charing Cross on Thursday, January 5, by the Calais mail. A number of members of the Savage Club Lodge witnessed their departure. During the evening the following messages were received in London. The first was from Detective Stammers and was to the following purport:

"Boulogne, 6.21 p.m.

"The body of Mr. McNiell found at 8 a.m. to-day on the sand near the new harbour here. No money of any kind on the body, and the only things found telegram forms with report respecting the fight, two pencils, a pair of scissors, a pair of gloves, a French map—with the name of A. McNiell, 139, Fleet Street, no doubt in his own handwriting—two tickets from Boulogne to London, dated December 20. "STAMMERS."

The other telegram was from the harbour master, who showed the greatest kindness throughout the inquiry. It read as follows:

"Boulogne, 6.30.

"Clothed as described, nose broken, severe wounds on the head, no money in pockets, two pencils, scissors, ticket, account of fight on telegraph form, map of France with his name. Stammers thinks rings taken off before death, as fingers are swollen. Post-mortem takes place to-morrow.
"FARMER."

These messages conclusively pointed to the fact that deceased met with foul play. He was not the man to commit suicide. On the contrary, his opinion expressed to friends innumerable showed that he always held that mode of quitting this life to be cowardly. Mr. Welcome's researches at Boulogne proved conclusively that he was accompanied dur-

ing the interval of waiting for the second boat by a man of ordinary appearance, who officiated as interpreter. Mr. McNiell was a man of small stature, and when his spectacles were off, he was so shortsighted that he was nearly blind.

And now a few words about the antecedents of the man who, there is every reason to believe, was so foully done to death in Boulogne on that December night in 1887. Archibald McNiell was a journalist of unusual ability. He was originally intended for the Baptist Church ministry, and received a thorough education in the college connected with that denomination in Birmingham, where his parents resided. He thought, however, that he had a penchant for journalism, and his first article was written for the "Birmingham Daily Mail" in reference to a local colliery in which coal had been found after many hopeless months of mining. He subsequently joined the staff of the "Birmingham Morning News," when that unfortunate journal was edited by Mr.

THE DISCOVERY OF MR. McNIELL'S CORPSE.

George Dawson, the celebrated lecturer. At that time his colleagues were Mr. Henry Madeley, of the Press Association, since dead; Mr. David Christie Murray, the famous novelist; Mr. Peter Bruce, Mr. Thomas Nelson Browne, of the "Newcastle Chronicle," and Mr. Robert Redman. When the "Morning News" collapsed, Mr. McNiell was engaged as leader writer and dramatic critic on the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle." He came to London in 1878, and wrote for several newspapers and magazines, including the ill-fated "Light." A few years later he joined the staff of the "Sportsman," and on this paper he did some really splendid work. He was, perhaps, best known as the writer of 'Notes on News" for that paper, the theatrical column signed "Lorgnette," and many brilliantly descriptive articles of the lawns at Goodwood, Ascot, and Henley. To members of the racing world in general he was but little known. At Ascot, at Goodwood, at Newmarket on a big day, he was to be seen, generally in the paddock, and capital were the descriptions he wrote of the scene and the folks to be found there. Nothing escaped him; from a novel shade of colour of a glove to a peculiarity in the lash of a whip, and he was always seeking for information, glancing keenly through gold-rimmed spectacles whilst his questions were being answered. In racing he appeared to take hardly any interest, and the only horse I remember hearing him mention was St. Mirin, just before the Cambridgeshire of 1886. With some members of the racing world poor McNiell was of necessity acquainted, and they felt for him the regard that he may truly be said to have won from all sorts and conditions of men. As a rule he was a most cheery and lively companion, full of fun and fancy; he was an excellent journalist, and a clever man, with more in him than even some of his admirers supposed.

He was a prominent member of the Savage Club, and also secretary of the Savage Club Masonic Lodge. As an instance of the respect in which his memory was held by that body, it may be mentioned that the following notice was posted upon the notice board of the club on January 6, 1888: "Out of respect to the memory of A. McNiell, the house dinner will not be held to-morrow, the 7th inst."

He was universally beloved, and it would be impossible to describe the grief and gloom which fell upon Fleet Street when the news of his death was made known.

Mr. McNeill was most certainly a bright and clever young journalist, whose descriptive style was singularly picturesque and effective. He was a competent dramatic critic, and his kindly and generous disposition endeared him to all who knew him. He belonged to the school of young provincial newspaper writers who were trained by Mr. Joseph Cowen, and who all, to some extent, have caught some of the contagious enthusiasm of their master. To this, in the case of Mr. McNiell, was added the perfervidum ingenium of his Scottish parentage, though it is a little important in examining the mystery of his fate to remember that his character was always fairly well ballasted by north-country shrewdness. We have seen that he was a man of great personal courage.

and of almost boyish venturesomeness. His sole physical defect was his short-sightedness, to which I have already made allusion. He was of a busy, bustling temperament, always at work, and never so happy as when he had plenty of it to do. His personal habits were simple and his life blameless. Though not married, he had been a domesticated man almost from his boyhood, for by means of his busy pen he not only supported his sisters, with whom he lived, and whose idol he was, but even educated, and educated well, his younger brothers. He had thus given many hostages to fortune, and was not quite the kind of person to fling his life away in a public-house brawl or in a row in a Continental gaming-house. Nor was he the kind of man who could be suddenly snuffed out of existence without giving his assailant some trouble.

If Mr. McNiell worked up his notes after he left the steamer, it would be dark ere he finished, and, in any case, he would naturally, for relaxation, stroll through the town to pass the time. He might have gone into a café chantant, and then into some of the meaner cabarets about the harbour to see the people, for he was much given, like men of his class, to studying character and making notes of out-of-the-way sights and folk for literary purposes. In such a place he might easily have been half poisoned by the vile stuff sold there for brandy, and then, if he went out into the dark night to look at the harbour, he might well, being an excessively short-sighted man, have fallen over one of the quays into the water. Or, again, supposing he escaped all perils of the town till midnight, then he still had two hours to pass waiting for his steamer. What happened during this period?

The conclusion arrived at by the medical men who conducted the autopsy of McNiell's body seemed to take the French authorities completely by surprise. From the very first the police favoured the theory that Mr. McNiell's death was the result either of suicide or accident, and to this belief their chiefs still seemed to adhere, even after the post-mortem examination of the body had been made. The doctors engaged were Dr. Aigré, of Boulogne, Dr. Harvey, of 69, Rue Faidherbe, Boulogne, and Dr. Alfred Cheene Fletcher, of the Charterhouse and St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. The last-named was a very old friend of the deceased, and arrived at Boulogne on Friday night, January 6.

The examination was held at the morgue, and during the whole of the time it was in progress a large number of English residents and pressmen gathered in the vicinity awaiting the result and discussing every phase of the melancholy occurrence. Mr. H. McNiell, brother of the deceased, was amongst those present at the morgue. The following was the result of the investigation made:

The first point which was clear was that the body had been in the water certainly ten or twelve days, and possibly more. This opinion was confidently expressed both by the medical men and by people who had been in the habit of dealing with drowned persons. The extraordinary state of preservation of the corpse was believed to be due to the coldness of the weather and other favourable conditions. When the body was discovered the head and face were hardly at all discoloured.

The body itself was practically free from marks of violence, but on the head and face there were six or seven extensive, contused wounds, quite sufficient to produce unconsciousness, if not death. The police, therefore, had no longer any doubt that the wounds were inflicted for the purpose of robbing the deceased, that he was robbed, and that, unconscious and probably dead, he was flung into the water.

Mr. McNiell was known by his friends to have worn a ring on his finger, which was so light that he never removed it. The ring was missing and the finger upon which it was worn was considerably swollen, but it would have been impossible to have removed the ring after death without leaving greater signs of violence.

In addition to the important injuries, the deceased's nose was broken, and his neck somewhat swollen. The wounds on the head and face were certainly caused during life.

As to the weapon with which the wounds were inflicted, the surgeons believed, from their circular shape, that they were either done with a stick or a knuckle-duster, probably the latter. The general appearance of the wounds, which were situated on the left side of the deceased's head, suggested that they were struck by a right hand.

There was a very large accumulation of blood behind the ear, which might have been caused by the deceased falling into the water before life was extinct. But, strange to say, the lungs exhibited no symptoms of death by drowning. The stomach was perfectly empty, showing that he had not partaken of food or drink for some hours previous to his death.

The general result of the examination pointed to the conclusion that Mr. McNiell was rendered unconscious by a blow, robbed, and then thrown into the water.

The body was found about 7.30 a.m. on Thursday, January 5, directly opposite the battery, where it had evidently been cast by the tide. Two labouring men appear to have been the first to see it, but they took no measures to remove it, and a gentleman walking on the shore, whose attention was directed to the corpse by the barking of his dogs, had it removed to the Boulogne Morgue.

When found, the deceased was lying on his back. Both his coats were buttoned up, but on his person there was not a single article of value. He had, however, his ticket, numbered 5,782, and also the telegraph forms from which it was supposed that, after missing the day boat, he had sat down and gone on with his work. Notwithstanding the long immersion, the writing was perfectly legible.

With regard to the movements of the deceased on the night when he was missed, there was evidence of his having been seen in three cafés on that night with a Frenchman who bore a very bad character, and who was missing for some time after Mr. McNiell's disappearance. The three cafés in which the couple were seen were the Café Chantant, the Café Fourny, and the Cosmopolitan, all being on the side of the harbour whence the boat started.

On Tuesday, January 10, the man who was with Mr. McNiell at the Café Fourny was arrested by the French police. His name was Vermeroch, and he professed to be unable to speak English. His friends, however, contradicted this. He denied having been with McNiell, but Madame Fourny was quite positive he was the man. After several remands, he was, however, set at liberty.

Strenuous efforts were made to rouse the French police to activity in the matter, but they seemed inclined to let the affair drop. A reward was suggested, but the French authorities said that such things were unknown in France, though they were quite aware that large sums were offered in England for the arrest or detection of criminals. An official inquiry at Boulogne, the outcome of much agitation in the English Press, simply took the form of a consultation between the Commissaire Central, the Parquet de Procureur, Mr. Horace Lennard, and Mons. Madaré, the French advocate representing the "Sportsman."

Mr. Bedford McNiell, brother of the missing journalist, sent the following telegram to the Savage Club, on Saturday, January 7:

> "My brother's turquoise ring, gold watch, and chain found at home."

And a later telegram from Boulogne, also to the Savage Club, read as follows:

> "The police received to-day a twenty and a five pound note from an anonymous correspondent, who stated that he found them on the beach."

No further clues were ever discovered, though a reward of 5,000 francs was offered by members of the Savage Club and other friends of the deceased, to which the proprietors of the "Sportsman" subscribed a further sum of £200. But in spite of all this the murderer or murderers were never discovered, and the mystery of the death of Archibald McNiell remains unsolved to this day, and must be relegated to the long list of crimes whose perpetrators have succeeded in evading the arm of justice.

The funeral of Mr. McNiell took place at Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, on Monday, January 9, 1888, and was attended by a very large number of friends from all parts.

The wreaths were exquisitely beautiful and they completely hid the top of the coffin.

A large and influential deputation of London journalists attended to pay a last tribute of respect to their lost colleague, including members of the Savage, Whitefriars, and Press Clubs, and of the Gallery and Savage Club Masonic Lodges. The service throughout was most effective, and the pastor delivered a very touching and appropriate address. As the body was lowered into the grave, the scene in the chill and foggy January afternoon was inexpressibly sad, and the surroundings seemed a fitting conclusion to the painful story.

Which?

MAGISTRATE (to Constable): "I am surprised at the lack of courage you displayed. How is it that you did not go to the assistance of the prosecutor?"

Constable (from Oireland): "Shure, an' Oi didn't know which of them would turn out to be the prosecutor, yer honour!"

CHAPTER XI.

AUSTRIAN HANGING, AMERICAN.

TIME naturally wrought great changes in the methods of hanging people, modes that were good enough for the folk of the Middle Ages being considered barbarous by those who succeeded them. The first alteration that was made was the substitution of the cart for the ladder. By humanitarians of the seventeenth century it was thought that the introduction of hanging by the cart marked an epoch, and was calculated to lessen the sufferings of the unfortunate condemned. Whether it did so or not remains to be seen.

The gallows were erected some distance away from the gaol, in most cases, and the vehicle in which the doomed man had ridden to the scene of execution served as a platform from which to "turn him off." Prisoners of distinction, however, were occasionally permitted to ride to their death in their own carriages, and a common cart was in waiting beneath the fatal beam to serve as a scaffold.

The modus operandi was simple enough. The condemned, on arriving at the spot where he was to suffer, addressed the assembled people, lamenting the misdeeds which had been the cause of his ruin, and generally giving utterance to the pious sentiments which were thought necessary in those days. The hangman, who had ridden with his victim from the prison to the gallows, then ascended the cart, and placed the noose round the poor wretch's throat. That done, he attached the free end of the rope to the beam above, for where the cart was used the gallows were made much lower than when the ladder was in fashion. After drawing a cap over the features of the condemned, the hangman then whipped the horse and the cart moved away, leaving the convict suspended by his neck. At the most a fall of a few inches was allowed, so it can readily be believed that death resulted from slow strangulation. Sometimes the hangman and his assistants pulled on the legs of the dangling wretch to hasten his release from his sufferings, but in the majority of cases he was permitted to hang till death supervened.

Frightful scenes were witnessed at executions in those days, the crowd standing awestruck as it watched the convulsions of the strangling culprit. Every contortion of the limbs were hailed with a cheer or a groan, according as the sufferer was popular or not; appalling curses and execrations occasionally rent the air and rendered the last moments of the unfortunate criminal more odious; hawkers boldly sang the praises of their wares the while a fellow-being was being done to death. Rich and poor, thief and lord, gentle and simple attended to see "the hanging," and cracked jokes at the sufferer's expense. But mingled in the crowd were a few men of feeling, and they noted that criminals took longer to die than in the days when the ladder was used for turning them off, and they inquired how this was. Then it struck someone that the fall from the ladder, far from being the infliction of needless pain on the culprit, was really of benefit and assisted in bringing about a speedy death. These folk were right, but it was long before the fact was recognised by those in authority.

Experiments were tried with the noose first, and the situation of the knot changed from the back of the neck to the right or left side, until at last it was decreed that, whenever possible, it should be placed beneath the ear and pulled fairly tight before the cart was driven off. This was done at the suggestion of a medical man, who declared that if the rope pressed on the great blood vessels in the neck death might ensue from apoplexy, which would be speedier than strangulation; while if actual death did not take place very rapidly, at least the victim would lose consciousness from the pressure of blood on the brain—"effusion and concentration of humours in the brain-pan" were his words—and thus be spared much torment. Certainly the means of adjusting the noose was an improvement on the old method, and, in spite of other great changes in the hangman's art, the "knot beneath the ear" was recognised as the correct practice till a few years ago.

The next great improvement in the gentle pastime of hanging was the introduction of the drop. Who the actual inventor was it is impossible to determine. Some will point out the gallows and drop preserved in a famous museum of curiosities, and tell you that it was the first gallows with a drop ever made, and that it was designed by Thurtell, who was hanged on it, in 1823, for the murder of Mr. Weare. There is a particle of truth in the statement. The gallows shown was the first provided with a drop of that particular pattern, and it was designed by Thurtell, who was hanged on it. But it was not the first gallows with a drop ever made or used in this country. Indeed, there is ample evidence to show that the drop was in use long before Thurtell was born. When the misguided Earl Ferrers was hanged at Tyburn for the murder of his steward a drop was used, and in the accounts of his execution it is mentioned that the instrument was new. The best pictures of the earl's exit from this world show him standing on a raised platform beneath the beam, while at the side of this scaffold waits the hearse and six which was to carry his body away from the scene of execution. That was in 1760, so it is safe to assume that the drop was invented some short time prior to that date.

The earliest drops were simple enough in construction. They were small collapsible platforms, seldom more than a foot high, and placed on the top of the general scaffold. The mechanism by which they were operated was of the crudest. The small square of planking on which the malefactor stood was supported by one or more beams of wood, to which ropes

Placed the noose round the poor wretch's throat.

were tied. When all was ready the executioner retired beneath the scaffold, and, on the word being given, pulled the ropes, which dragged away the props and the drop fell.

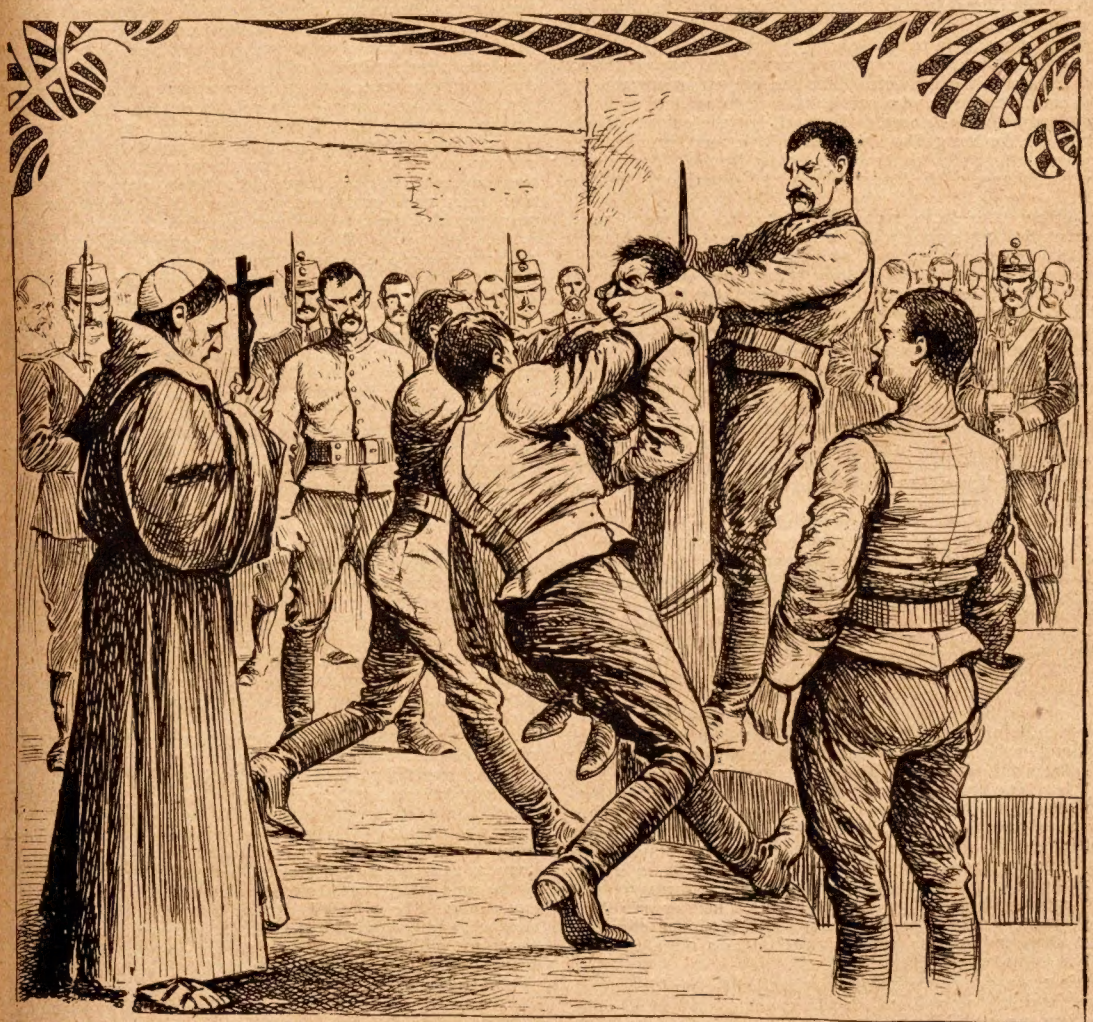
The amount of fall given to the condemned was at first very slight, six or eight inches being considered ample, the importance of the weight falling through a given space not being recognised. Modifications of this primitive drop were

used for some time, and in the life of Calcraft we read how the executioner used to go beneath the gallows to "draw the bolt." This bolt was a simple, sliding piece of wood, which supported the collapsible platform, and it was drawn by hand. Thurtell's gallows was the next improvement. In this instrument the drop consists of a single flap, supported by an iron bolt, which was operated by a lever at the side of the platform. The lever was horizontal, and the executioner had to descend from the scaffold before he could release the flap. The whole floor of the scaffold fell, save for a tiny space on which the chaplain could stand if he saw fit, or for a warder if the culprit showed signs of fainting.

As the victim stood in the centre of the trap-door it can be understood that when the flap fell the victim did not fall "plumb," the door giving him a swing, while the sliding motion of his feet on the massive floor rather broke his fall. This prevented death from being instantaneous, unless a very long drop was given. Modifications of Thurtell's drop were largely employed in the United Kingdom till comparatively recent times. Several of the Scotch and Irish gaols were fitted with permanent gallows, constructed on this principle, the falling door being of iron, and the scaffold itself consisting of a balcony over the prison door, or in some other exposed place. Most of those who suffered outside the door of the Old Bailey prior to the passing of the Private Executions Act slid to their death from a drop made on this plan.

When it was seen that public executions did not act as a deterrent to would-be murderers, and it was ordained that in future all malefactors should be hanged inside the prisons, more attention was given to the question of putting the sinner out of his misery as speedily and humanely as possible. Medical men were invited to give their opinions as to the quickest method of hanging evil-doers, and it was decided that the drop played an important part in the process. Old Calcraft worked by "rule of thumb," and was notorious for his short drops, but it was during his tenure of office that the Government introduced the double flap-drop. The pattern differed according to the gaol, and local engineers had a good deal to say in the matter of construction. Still, the double door, instead of the single flap, was generally adopted throughout the United Kingdom.

Marwood followed Calcraft, and he showed the supreme importance of allowing a culprit to fall through a long distance before he was checked by the rope. Marwood certainly overdid the matter, and had he known the proper method of placing the rope he would have assuredly dragged the heads off several of his "clients."



COVERS THE WRETCH'S NOSTRILS AND MOUTH WITH HIS HANDS.

It was in the days of Berry, who succeeded Marwood, that the Home Office had calculations made as to the proper length of drop to be given to convicts of different weights, and the principle of killing the murderer by strangulation was finally abolished. Then a regular scale of drops to be given was laid down, and though some latitude has to be allowed to the experienced hangman when he gives a reason for his request, it is in force to this day. That some consideration must be given to the physique and calling of the victim when determining the drop to be allowed him is well illustrated by the following incident, which took place at Kaira, in India, in 1894:

In the local gaol there lay a coolie under sentence of

death. He had chopped a woman into fragments because she would not give up her petty savings. He had appealed to the Governor in Council, and his appeal was rejected, and he had to die. There being no gallows at Kaira Gaol, a requisition was sent to the prison at Surat, and the necessary instrument forwarded forthwith. In accordance with the practice in India, the gallows were erected on the Maidan, or open plain, so that all might see the murderer executed. From the office of the Judicial Secretary to the Government of Bombay a scale was sent to the Superintendent of Kaira Gaol, telling him exactly what drop he was to give the wretched coolie. The superintendent, a doctor of experience, demurred at the five-feet-one which the scale allowed, and wrote to that effect to those in power, only to receive a stereotyped letter, "having the honour to state" that he was to obey orders. There being nothing for him to do but obey, he gave the necessary instruction to the prison officials, and on the following morning attended the execution. The coolie was brought out, calmly smoking a cigarette and apparently not the least afraid of his fate. The scaffold was mounted, and the out-caste Mopla who had been hired to officiate as hangman, adjusted the noose. Then all but the culprit left the platform, for the gallows was an old-type one, in which the whole platform fell on the lever being drawn. The magistrate in charge of the hanging gave the signal, and the drop fell.

At once the doctor went up and felt the convict's pulse. It was beating strongly. A minute elapsed, and he again felt the pulse, and again it was beating. The poor coolie's body was violently convulsed at times, and then he would hang limply, and the doctor would hope that he was dead, and feel his pulse. Seven times he did so, and it was not till fifteen minutes had elapsed from the falling of the drop that life was extinct. Now, that coolie had been a labourer, accustomed to carry very heavy weights on his head, and the muscles of his neck were enormously developed, as was seen at the subsequent post-mortem examination, when it was established that he had died from very slow strangulation. Instead of the five-feet-one that was allowed him, the drop should have been quite seven feet, and even then it is doubtful if the striking force would have been sufficient to have caused instantaneous death.

In 1885 the Government examined all the gallows in England and Ireland, and ordered that they should be made of one standard pattern. The plan adopted consists of a double trap-door, standing over a deep bricked pit. The doors are made of thick oak planking, and are supported by very strong hinges. The hinges of one flap are prolonged and under-pin the other, so that when these long ends rest on a bar of iron the drop is supported. By means of a lever mechanism is operated which removes the support from the hinges, and the two flaps fall simultaneously.

Now as to the ropes. In olden times they were simply thick cords made of common hemp. The slip knot was tied by hand in the roughest manner, and the wonder is that more accidents did not occur. To-day the ropes used are made of the best Italian hemp, very finely plaited. They are five-eighths of an inch in diameter before stretching, and when stretched measure about three-eighths of an inch. A new rope "gives" about three inches the first time it is used. At the "business end" of the halter a brass eyelet is spliced into the rope, and through this thimble the cord runs to form the noose. On the rope are one or more leather or rubber washers to prevent the noose slipping when once adjusted. The free end of the rope is attached to a piece of chain which is fastened to the beam.

Some years ago the hangman changed the position of the knot, which is now placed beneath the chin, instead of under the ear, and it is found that death follows the fall of the drop instantaneously.

With regard to the other accessories of the hangman. In olden times the arms of the malefactor were bound with rope, either behind his back or in front of him. Then Calcraft introduced pinioning straps, and Marwood took a positively fiendish delight in devising straps for the proper trussing of those who fell into his hands. At last the pinioning straps were reduced to a belt, which passed round the waist, to which were attached other straps, which secured the elbows and wrists of the doomed man. The present executioner, however, has abandoned this cumbrous belt in favour of a light double strap, with which the wrists are fastened behind the murderer's back. As a result, the process of pinioning, which previously took several minutes and was a period of much mental agony to the doomed, has been reduced to a single operation, which can be performed in a few seconds.

A modern execution is a very simple proceeding. At an early hour the condemned man is awakened, and the chaplain is in attendance. Breakfast is served, and it may be as well here to state that the idea that a condemned prisoner can have whatever he likes for his last meal is an erroneous one. A good plain meal is provided, but such items as roast duck, for which one convict asked, are not supplied. After breakfast the chaplain continues his ministrations until the under-sheriff enters the cell, accompanied by the hangman and his assistant. In an instant the malefactor is pinioned, while the officials are asking him if he has any last words to say. The moment the pinioning is completed the procession sets out for the execution shed, walking as rapidly as possible, to prevent the prisoner from breaking down. In a trice the culprit is placed beneath the beam, and the assistant-executioner stoops down and fastens a strap around the doomed man's ankles, while the chief hangman adjusts the noose round his victim's throat and places a cap over his face. Without waiting an instant all then step back, save a warder, who stands on a plank which is laid across the drop, in case the convict should faint. The lever is grasped and swiftly thrown over. With a resounding crash the heavy doors swing downwards, the rope runs out its full length and is checked with a horrid, squelching, crunching noise. The chaplain falters through a verse more of the Psalm he is reading, and all retire. The hanging is over. An hour later the body is taken down from the gallows, a post-morten examination made, and a coroner's jury sits to decide how the man met his death. After that formality the body is buried in the prison yard. The days of long and solemn processions are over; speed is the main thing nowadays.

While on the subject of hanging, we may mention the Austrian mode of inflicting the extreme penalty, which, as we pointed out in an earlier article, is not unlike garotting. The gallows consists of a simple upright post, at the foot of which is a low stool, or a couple of steps. The post terminates in a strong iron spike. The executioner-in-chief is helped by a regular posse of assistants. The culprit is brought out from his cell, with his hands bound behind him. The governor of the prison reads the sentence, and hands the culprit over to the executioner. In an instant the assistants seize their victim and drag him to the post, while the chief hangman produces from his pocket a loop of silken cord about a foot long. The assistants lift the wretched man up, and the chief, standing on the steps, passes the loop beneath the doomed creature's chin, and hitches the other end over the spike. Then the subordinates drag on the man's body, while the principal hangman, who wears gloves, covers the strangling wretch's nostrils and mouth with his hands to help in the general work of strangulation. By degrees the struggles grow less and less, and after a final convulsive wriggle the murderer is dead. The whole process is most revolting, and we wonder that a country like Austria, which boasts of its civilisation, should have retained such a relic of barbarism on its statute books.

Another variation of hanging is to be found in the method which obtains in some of the States of America. In England the essential part of our process is the weight of the falling body dislocating the vertebræ of the neck. In the States, for the sake of novelty apparently, the neck is broken by means of a falling weight. That is to say that on the lever being drawn, instead of the body of the malefactor falling, a heavy weight is released previously attached to the other end of the rope, which runs over a pulley. When the slack rope has run out the culprit is jerked from his feet with great violence, and flies up into the air. It is hoped that this rough treatment will fracture the murderer's spine, but experience shows that it very rarely does so, and it is only an aggravation of the strangling process. The fault lies in the fact that the feet of the victim are not fixed in any way, so the full force of the shock is not imparted to the spinal column. It is a most inhuman means of killing an offender, and one which should be abolished as soon as possible. Of other American modes of executing those who have been doomed to die we will write in the next article.

A Russian Crime.

Not long since, a fearful crime was committed under rather novel circumstances, near Lipomez, in the Government of Kieff, in Russia.

A widower was in love with a young woman, whom he wished to marry, and he was anxious that she should not know that he had already three children alive, whose ages varied from two to six years. In order to remove what he supposed to be the obstacle to his marriage, he put the children naked in a field at night, when the frost and cold were intensely keen, and left them. The next morning they were found frozen to death, and the peasant was arrested, tried, and condemned to death.

ESCAPED CONVICT No. 9.

Realistic Serial Story

By TOM GALLON.

INTRODUCTORY.

It is my purpose to write not the history of my life, but of one short week of it, into which was crammed more incident and more adventure than falls to the lot of most men in the course of a long lifetime. That history is set out with some pomp and circumstance at Scotland Yard. It is wonderfully accurate, from their point of view. But they have not, and never will have, the story of one amazing week. I propose to set it out in detail here.

Still, with no desire to excuse myself or to palliate my manifold offences, I may state, in all common fairness and justice, that I began badly. My mother died very soon after I was born. Of my father you shall hear in these pages. Suffice it for the moment to say that, whatever dexterity in criminal ways I possess, I owe it to that worthy man. Whatever slipperiness is in me came from him. Whenever I remember, with some pride, my own performances, I raise my hat and acknowledge, with greater pride, that he outmatched me.

There was no shady transaction in which, during a long and industrious life, he did not take a leading part; he trained young thieves, and received the swag of older ones; he planned and plotted successfully in many directions; he was without mercy, and without fear; and he would not have hesitated to send me—his only son—to the gallows. He had a soft and pleasing manner of speech, and, marvellous to relate, when one remembers all he did—*he was stone blind*. Yet, so warped was the man's mind, that from the earliest he chose those ways of life I have already indicated, and brought me up to follow in his footsteps.

Few growing boys had the experience I had in my youth. I met the strangest people. Thieves' patter was almost the first language I lisped; and I got quite used to missing a friend for a space, what time he or she was serving the Government behind locked doors. This was the only life I knew. So many years have gone by that I almost forget how first I began. We were always well dressed, and did business in good style. None of your vulgar pocket-picking for us. We worked on much larger lines. I graduated in a school of iniquitous learning; and I think in time my father grew quite proud of me.

So great was the feeling of loyalty towards that blind old man—or so great was our fear of what he might do—that I remember well how naturally I accepted his attitude on the occasion of my first conviction. I can still conjure up the scene:

The crowded Court; the grim figure of the Judge; all the accusing witnesses; then the comments on my youth and refined appearance. And, last of all, my father.

How he wept, that good old man! I can see the tears streaming from his sightless eyes now. I laughed out loud, and shook a fist at him before them all. That little action got me another six months. I will spare any readers I may have the sordid details—the coming out of prison, only to go in again; the escape here, by the skin of one's teeth, as it were; the capture there, with its inevitable result. I was constantly in trouble. At last, for a little matter of forgery, I got a longer stretch than usual, and said good-bye to my father for a number of years. My last sight of him was when I saw him—weeping, as usual on these occasions—being shaken hands with by a good and philanthropic man, who was endeavouring to console him.

You—wise and virtuous people—may find it difficult to understand that desperate longing for liberty which comes over a man whose every action is restrained and whose every movement is watched.

It was a night in June. I had a vision of green fields, and trees whispering in the wind—and even of children plucking flowers in the fields. It was a sort of madness, I suppose; but I knew that stone walls wouldn't hold me for another twenty-four hours if any chance came my way.

It came unexpectedly. I had got friendly with one of the warders—a heavy, loutish fellow, who was amused by my talk. He looked in that night at an unfortunate moment—just when the fever of longing was most strongly on me. I see again his surprised and startled face when I first got him by the throat. Well—I didn't kill him. He still wore a look of pained surprise when I left him—gagged with his own handkerchief, and bound with a bit of rope I had got from the oakum shed that very day. The worst part was to come. I had on, over my own dress, his coat and trousers, and on my head his cap; his keys were at my belt. I locked him in, and started off on the first stage of my perilous journey.

My cell was Number 9 in the top gallery, and iron bridges ran across from one side of the prison to the other, connecting the opposite galleries. I marched along past one end of the bridge on which a warder stood.

"All right?" he asked, as I passed.

"All right!" I growled in reply; and I had not studied my friendly warder's voice for nothing.

That was danger number one safely passed; I went on with more confidence. I could get no farther, even with the keys I held. The warders were locked in, equally with the prisoners. There was no passing the outer gates except by rousing the man who had charge of them. And I had had enough of throttling for one night.

However, I had not made my calculations for nothing. A second key fitted the outer door, and, in less time than it takes to write, I found myself outside the building, under the stars.

There I made my first mistake. I was so astonished at my luck that I forgot for a moment the character I had to sustain; so that when I saw a warder coming slowly towards me, as I stepped from the door, I simply dropped my keys and ran for it. The man gave a shout, and dashed after me. Seeing that I must fight for it, I stopped, and came threateningly back towards him.

I made a dash for my man, and sent him down like a ninepin—not quick enough, however, to prevent him shouting out at the top of his voice.

Whistles were soon blowing all about, and the alarm-bell was clanging high up in the roof. Luckily, no one seemed to know what prisoner had escaped, or where he was. The cells were all locked, and my uniform covered my retreat. Coming to a corner of the prison yard, under the high wall I found a scaffold-pole, which had been left, with a plank or two, by some men executing repairs. I set it against the angle of the wall, and swarmed up like a monkey. Once on the top of the wall, I looked round for a moment, while the whistles were going and the bell booming—and dropped over into safety.

All about me stretched the desolate country.

I saw lights gleaming down in a valley a long way below me.

During that awful night I had got down once quite close to some cottages, and then, at the barking of a dog, had bolted again into the open country.

The clock of a little church down in the valley had chimed five, when I woke from a doze into which I had fallen, and started up, shivering, to hear a footstep quite near me.

Peering out cautiously, I saw a mild and benevolent-looking elderly gentleman carrying a fishing-rod over his shoulder. I believe I must have had a sort of pang of remorse in me when I thought of what was destined to happen to that old gentleman within the next few minutes. But necessity knows no law.

I told him what he had to do, and offered him the choice of two suits in place of his own. He chose that of the warder, and put it on, protesting feebly.

I left him with his fishing-rod, standing in the middle of the path, gazing helplessly all about him. He gave me his promise that he would not say in which direction I had gone, or assist in any way in my re-capture. And I believed him.

Plunging my hands into the pockets of the old gentleman's clothes, I found a little money, which, in his excitement, he had forgotten. Armed with that, I went down to the village, and turned into the quietest public-house I could discover, and got something to eat—and the first drink of any quality for years past. Warmed with the food and drink, I felt that freedom was really before me. So, effectively disguised, as I thought, I set out towards the nearest town.

I suspected everyone. The most innocent-looking cottager who stared at me knew, so far as I was concerned, all about me. I shall never forget in all my life the shock I had, when I turned a corner hastily, and ran right into the arms of a country policeman. I got so horribly nervous towards the close of the day, and so desperate, that I went into a little pawnbroker's shop in the town to which I had been directed and bought a revolver, using for its purchase most of the money I had left. It would have gone hard with anyone who tried to stop me.

When a man has been for some years shut away from his fellows, and denied intercourse with them, one of his most desperate longings, naturally enough, is to talk. To that very natural longing to speak with a fellow-creature I attribute all the desperate happenings I was to encounter within a few hours of that time. That longing grew so desperate at last that I went into a small public-house on the outskirts of the little town, in the hope to find someone to whom I could open my lips, however cautiously. As luck would have it, I lighted on the wrong man.

He was a little fellow, with a pair of beady eyes; and he sat alone in the bar-parlour, thoughtfully sucking at a pipe. I didn't like the look of him from the first. His answer to my salutation was a startling one.

"Evenin'. There's a convic' escaped this mornin'—said to be nigh about 'ere."

"Indeed!" I said, in a voice of surprise; but my teeth began to chatter.

"Youngish chap," he went on, still eyeing me narrowly.

"Might be about your build, I should say. Come to look at you, Mister——"

He got no further. The little bar-parlour was empty, save for the man and myself, and with those beady eyes upon me, I lost my nerve. I whipped out the revolver, and held it within an inch or two of his startled face.

"Another word, and I'll blow your brains out—if you have any," I whispered.

I saw, the very instant I spoke, what a terrible blunder I had committed. There was nothing for it now but flight. With a further threat to him I slipped the revolver into my pocket, and walked outside. It was growing dark, and I hoped to be able to slip away.

Looking back, when I had gone some twenty or thirty yards, I saw that the little man with the beady eyes was outside in the road, and was deliberately following me. Coming to a corner, I darted round and took to my heels, not daring to look back.

To remain abroad was out of the question; I must seek shelter somewhere. In the gathering darkness I looked about to find shelter.

I wanted money, and I wanted food—to say nothing of shelter. Food would sustain me; with money I could have a chance of getting out of that part of the country. And there, while I hesitated, appeared before me the very place I was looking for.

It was an old, well-built, substantial-looking house, standing in its own grounds. It had a desolate air; the grounds had a neglected look about them. Hearing footsteps near at hand, I opened the gate and slipped in.

The lower windows, so far as I could see, were closely shuttered; I tried a door, but could not open it. I was just making up my mind to go away again and try some more likely spot, when the footsteps I had heard stopped outside the very gate of the garden, and I saw peering in of all horrible visions at that time, a constable! I waited breathlessly until he had moved away from the gate, and was hidden by the high wall that surrounded the place. Then, very cautiously, I made my way round the house to the farther side of it, and looked for some weak spot at which I might enter.

I found one, more easily than I had hoped. I scrambled to the window on the first floor. The window was unfastened. I lifted it up, got a leg over the window-sill, and dropped softly into the room.

It was so dark that I could see nothing at first, but as I moved I stumbled against an overturned chair, and made an awful noise in that silent place. Standing still, scarcely daring to breathe for a moment or two, and hearing no sound in the house, I regained courage, and ventured to strike a light. Then came the worst shock of all.

At a table in the middle of the room was a man seated, apparently asleep, with his head down on his arms. The room was in confusion. The table on which the man leaned and the floor all about him were strewn with playing cards. I dropped the match, and backed to the window, with my hand on the revolver.

There was no movement; the man was evidently so dead asleep that he had not heard the noise I had made.

"Drunk," I whispered to myself, and went forward to have a nearer look at him.

I lit a candle that stood almost at his elbow, and then touched him on the shoulder, and shook him. As I did so, he suddenly rolled out of his chair, and fell at my feet. Looking down at him, with my very hair stirring on my head, I saw that one side of his head was battered and broken in.

Good heavens! he was dead!

As I recoiled from him, with a cry, I heard a door close with a bang, and then the sound of ascending footsteps.

* * * * * *

I have been in many tight corners during a somewhat adventurous career; but I think that that was the tightest. At the sound of the approaching steps I blew out the light. I had a sickening remembrance of the policeman who had looked in at the gate. I backed into a corner of the room, in the darkness, and awaited events.

They were cruelly slow in getting to the room, those footsteps. I crouched there, counting the footsteps as they came on up the stairs. Then a new sound broke in and mingled with them.

It was the tap of a stick. In the dread silence of the place I could hear that stick feeling its way, as it were, up the stairs and along a corridor—two taps on the floor, and then one, softer, on the wall beside. And so, with that regular beat, to which my heart kept time, the footsteps came on to the door, and I could hear regular breathing outside.

I got my revolver ready, for I was desperate by that time, and quite ready to shoot down whoever was coming, if necessary. I heard a key put into the lock, and softly turned. A man entered the room, and there hesitated, turning sightless eyes towards where I stood.

I was face to face with my father.

(For the continuation of this thrillingly realistic story see No. 17 of "Yes or No?" which will be on sale on Monday next.)

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Bulgarian Bride.

NEWS of a strange crime, committed under rather unusual circumstances, has come from Bulgaria.

Lazar Olygan, a peasant, married a girl named Sophia Skara, and gave a dance after the ceremony, to which he invited, amongst others, his dearest friend—a man named Bungarski. After the jollifications were over, bride and bridegroom were invited to visit Bungarski's parents. The bride and the latter, a good-looking and susceptible young fellow, entered the carriage, and the newly-made husband officiated as coachman.

Arrived at Bungarski's house, Olygan detected his friend in the act of kissing his wife. He seized a hatchet and furiously attacked the pair, both of whom succumbed to the injuries inflicted by the enraged husband.

Olygan was sentenced to death, but eventually respited.

Mr. Fox's Watch.

FOX, the great statesman, was once present at a balloon ascent—the first that ever took place in this country. The crowd was immense, and Fox, happening to put his hand down to his watch, found another hand upon it, which he instantly seized.

"My friend," said he to the stranger whose hand he still held, "you have chosen an occupation that will ruin you at last." The thief begged hard to be forgiven, and Fox, crediting his tale of misery, slipped a guinea into his hand, and let him depart. A few moments later he discovered that his watch had really gone. His brother-in-law approached him, and said: "Yes, I saw your friend take it just now; but you appeared to be on such capital terms with him that I did not like to interfere!"

He Kicked the Dog.

A MURDERER was once apprehended in a very strange and remarkable manner. A gentleman riding along a quiet and lonely road, came across the body of a man who had certainly been murdered. Beside the corpse was a dog, which ran off on being disturbed in his mission as watcher, and made for a distant public-house. The gentleman followed. Inside were three men, two of them carelessly conversing in a corner and the third brooding moodily over a fire.

The gentleman immediately gave the dog a tremendous kick and the animal ran howling to the lonely figure at the fire. "What do you kick my dog for?" cried the man. "Because I chose," said the other; "and now I mean to arrest you for the murder." The culprit fell upon his knees, and confessed to the crime.

His Uncles!

DR. JOHNSON found his wife in the person of a Mrs. Porter, a widow, living at Birmingham, then a small and unpretentious village. The lady was twice as old as the renowned sage, and she refused him several times, because, as she said, "An uncle of hers had been hung, and she had no wish to bring disgrace upon her learned admirer and his family."

"Is that all?" Johnson remarked. "Well, though I have never had an uncle hung, I have had several who deserved it. So let's get married, and think no more of that."

Replies to Queries

CROYDON ENQUIRER.—Our version is correct: Peace never was there.

SID COOMBES.—Yes, murdered on Newmarket Heath in 1805 or 1806. May give it.

JORDAN.—William Styles was hanged in 1841. Evidence certainly was not too strong.

J. SMITH.—There have been several "Penge Murders," small as the place is. Which do you mean?

J. DUNNISTER.—(1) She is now in Woking Gaol. (2) Charlie Barton, we think it was. He was so partial to the fair sex. (3) In 1880.

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